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QUAINT BITS  
OF  
LOWELL HISTORY  

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SARA SWAN GRIFFIN



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# QUAINT BITS OF LOWELL HISTORY

A FEW INTERESTING STORIES  
OF EARLIER DAYS

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BY SARA SWAN GRIFFIN  
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*Illustrated*



LOWELL  
BUTTERFIELD PRINTING COMPANY  
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Gift  
H. M. Ballou  
May 2. 14



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Old Homes and Historic Byways  
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BOWERS HOUSE



HALE HOUSE



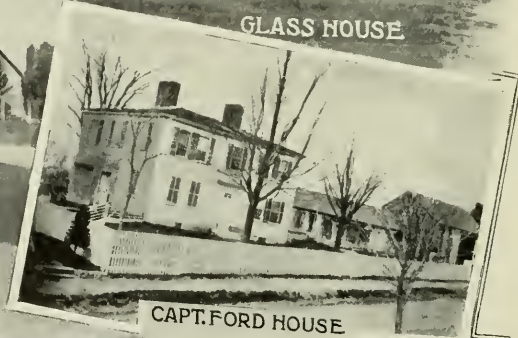
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GLASS HOUSE



CLARK TAVERN



CAPT. FORD HOUSE



SPALDING HOUSE



GARRISON HOUSE

# Old Homes and Historic Byways of Lowell

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The spot on which the city of Lowell now stands is not without historic interest. The wigwams of the Indians or the scattered homes of the early English settlers at one time stood where now are almost innumerable industries or spacious streets and residences.

And before all memory of the early inhabitants of this locality has faded away and all knowledge of the old traditions has been lost from among us, it may be both wise and interesting to make in fancy a circuit of our city, and with the "Old Highway to the Merrimack" as a starting point, to revive an interest in a few of the nearly forgotten homes and lives of those who made it possible for the Lowell of today to be in existence.

In 1659 we find the term "Highway to the Merrimack" first mentioned in certain old Chelmsford deeds. It was no doubt the old road to Golden Cove, but the Lowell end is now called Stedman street. Originally the road turned down by Mt. Pleasant Spring, but later it was straightened out through Stedman and Baldwin streets to the river.

About 1655 we find the first record of any English inhabitants of what is now the city of Lowell, seven or eight families having settled in the vicinity of the "Old Highway," attracted to the spot by its proximity to the river and the fact that land had been cleared here by the Indians.

Rude as were the surroundings of these first settlers, and adverse as were the circumstances under which they labored, they yet found time to remember the "beginnings of wisdom," for as early as 1699 we find that the wife of John Wright, living

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

in this neighborhood, was authorized to hold at her house a "dame school" to "learne young persons to Reed and write," as the old record quaintly puts it.

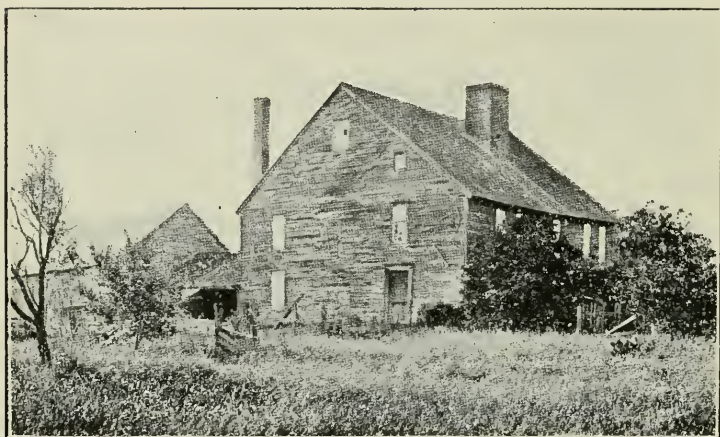
A short distance from the "Old Highway" on what is now called Wood street is the Sewall Bowers house, which is doubtless the oldest building in our city. The farm has been in the possession of the Bowers family since the first settlement of Chelmsford, and is mentioned in the early records as having been a rendezvous for the colonists in times of danger, and for neighborly conference. Also as early as 1686, a "still" was licensed at this place for the manufacture of "strong waters" that may be sold to "Christians but not to Indians." The numerous foot-paths that may even yet be traced to the old Bowers house show that the early settlers made the most of their privileges.

Opposite the foot of Wood street, and on the bank of the river, was erected in 1675 by Major Hinchman a "Garrison House," which was used as a place of safety for the families in this section during King Phillip's War and the later skirmishes with the Indians. Not a trace is left of the old log structure, but memory still retains the story of how the neighboring farmers, with their wives and little ones, hastened to the old house for shelter when rumors of the attacks by Indians in the adjoining towns filled their hearts with horror and dismay. Remains of an old well have been found near this site and tradition connects it with the old "Garrison House."

Farther down on the bank of the Merrimack with its grounds gently sloping to the river's edge, stands what is called today the "Middlesex Hotel," but in the early Colonial days bore the title of "Clark's Tavern." As early as 1728, Captain Jonas Clark was the genial inn-keeper, a man of prominence and a descendant of Rev. Thomas Clark of Chelmsford. Captain Clark was succeeded in the tavern by his son Timothy who







THE OLD DURKEE HOUSE

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

kept up the old customs and traditions of the house. We may aptly borrow Longfellow's lines to describe this once famous place of entertainment:

"As ancient is this hostelry,  
As any in the land, may be,  
Built in the old Colonial days,  
When men lived in a grander way  
With ampler hospitality."

This tavern was near Clark's Ferry and was a popular resort for the fashionable and distinguished people of the day. The carriages of Lowell's wealthiest families at the present time cannot compare in grandeur to the coaches with armorial bearings which rolled up to that hospitable door in the old Colonial days. Among its guests have been Lafayette, Hancock, and scores of other notabilities, and the brilliancy of the dinner parties given within its walls in the days of its early grandeur can hardly be excelled even in the luxury of this generation.

Crossing the Merrimack river by the means of Clark's Ferry to the opposite shore, and proceeding along Ferry Road, we come to the old Durkee house. The date of the erection of this house is a matter of dispute. It is on, or near, the site of the John Webb house, built about 1660, and may have been the original home of this prominent settler whose possessions were vast for that period. Its architecture shows it to be of Colonial times, and the many interesting traditions connected with its history give it an air of romance. From one of its upper rooms, it is said, the early colonists resisted an attack of the prowling Mohawks at the time of King Phillip's War, and also from one of its windows the horrified inmates saw the murder of the two Varnum boys by the Indians, as they were crossing the Merrimack river in their canoe. The so-called Durkee house was the most pretentious of its time in this location and was always used as a place of rendezvous by the neighboring colonists. Also in later years

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

as a tavern of good and notable repute, for by its door passed the stages and stately carriages, whose occupants were travelling down from New Hampshire to Boston. Here in 1776 the neighbors came to listen to the sound of the firing of the cannon at Bunker Hill, and the old hall, in which doubtless they were gathered, still retains its original features—the smooth hard floor for dancing, and the raised benches on which the guests sat, and looked on as the red-cheeked girls and the sturdy farmer boys danced the old country reels.

The "Old Meadow Road," at a later date, ran down to the river and by means of Clark's Ferry one could cross to the Chelmsford side. On this old road, now hardly more than a path, stood the "Ministree," the home of the first minister of Dracut, the Rev. Thomas Parker. In this house also lived for some years the noble French exile, Colonel Marie Louis Amand Ansart De Maresquelles, and to this house in 1784 came Lafayette to visit his old-time friend and comrade in the military circles of France.

Colonel Marie Louis Amand Ansart De Maresquelles, a member of the French Court, a son of a Marquis, and nephew of the great French Marquis Montalembert, came to America in 1776. Because of the valuable secret which he disclosed to the Colonial government in regard to the manufacture of solid cannon, he was appointed by this government as Colonel of Artillery and Inspector General of the Foundries of Massachusetts, and in such capacity he served until the close of the Revolutionary War. On account of political troubles in France, Colonel De Maresquelles decided to adopt America as his country, and laying aside his noble rank, he was naturalized in the courts of Massachusetts, under the name of Louis Ansart. Choosing Dracut for his home, Colonel Ansart lived in this quiet country town until his death in 1804. He is buried in what is now known as Woodbine Cemetery, and which he had

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

apportioned from his farm and given to Dracut for a "Burying Ground" for the use of the Ansarts, Coburns and Varnums, and where, after "life's fitful fever," he sleeps as calmly on the rugged New England hillside as if he lay in the ancestral tomb in sunny France.

On a lane off Varnum Avenue, formerly a part of the Old Meadow Road, is the old Varnum homestead. Built probably about 1700, it has sheltered seven generations of Varnums, and it stands today in dignified seclusion, a type of the early homes of the prosperous colonists. No transfer by deed has been passed of the Varnum property since the early grant from John Webb to Samuel Varnum in 1664, and the name of Varnum has always been prominently associated with all the political, church and social life of Dracut.

On Varnum Avenue, near the terminus of the electric car line, stands a small building known as the Coburn Mission. It was the first school house built in the town of Dracut and was erected in 1755. As that part of Dracut has been now annexed to Lowell, it is the oldest school building within the limits of this city. In this little building a great part of the business of the colonists in this neighborhood was transacted, and tradition records that, at the time of the Revolution, the Committee of Safety met within its walls.

On the road leading from Pawtucketville to the Navy Yard is the site of the famous Garrison House of Dracut. It was built about 1669 by Edward Colburn as a place of protection for the early settlers against the hostile Indians. The old histories of Dracut tell of some fiery encounters at the old Garrison House and of one woman, who single-handed, defended herself and children against an attacking party of Indians. The old house has been torn down and it seems sad that such an interesting memento of the early New England life should have been destroyed.

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

Retracing our steps through this part of Lowell which was formerly a historic neighborhood of Dracut, and re-crossing the river at Clark's Ferry, we reach the spot that was the head of the "Old Middlesex Canal." For its time, this enterprise was a wonderful feat of engineering and was the first canal in the United States opened for the transportation of travellers, and until the introduction of railroads, the Middlesex Canal was of great public benefit. Lumber and grain from the upper Merrimack, with other products of the country, found their way through the canal to Boston where they were exchanged for the commodities of the city, which were transferred back by means of the canal into the country. But in a few years after the completion of the railroads, the canal was discontinued, and now nearly all traces of it are obliterated.

Not far from the head of the Canal, the "Old Highway" touches Middlesex street, and on it is found all that is left of the once famous Chelmsford Glass Works. These works were established here in 1802 by Boston manufacturers and at one time made a prominent industry in the little town of Chelmsford. But now, not a vestige remains of the dismal old wooden factory, black with the smoke of the big furnaces. One of the tenement houses is still standing that were built by the glass company, and it causes one to think of an unhappy ghost, doomed to haunt the scene of its former prosperity.

On another old road now known as Pine street is seen the Henry Parker house, opposite the Highland School. No other family but the Parkers has been in possession of this estate since the Indians sold their claims to Wamesit, yet it is impossible to decide when the first Parker set up his home on the present attractive site. But one Benjamin Parker, the record of whose birth is given as 1663, is supposed to have been the first of the family to locate here. In the early Indian

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

struggles, and also in the Revolutionary War, young men have gone forth from this homestead to perform their part with valor and bravery.

Following the old lane over which childish feet passed and re-passed so many years ago to the little red schoolhouse that stood near what is now the corner of School and Westford streets, we recall that one of the pupils in this school was Benjamin Pierce, afterwards governor of New Hampshire and father of Franklin Pierce, President of the United States.

School street, which takes its name from this "ancient seat of learning," winds along by the old cemetery over the hill to Pawtucket street, near what was once the residence of Captain John Ford, famous in our Revolutionary history.

When the alarm was sounded April 19th, 1775, Captain Ford was at work in the saw-mill which was near his house. Hastening to his home for the necessary equipments, he started at once for Chelmsford Centre, to join the company that went from there. Captain Ford also served at Bunker Hill, and Ticonderoga and marched against Burgoyne..

After the war had closed, Captain Ford resumed business at his saw-mill, furnishing lumber for the building of many notable houses of the day. He also built for himself a much more pretentious residence on the site of his early home. And with no material changes, it has always been occupied by his descendants, among them being the present occupants of the house, Mrs. Mary Earl Wood and Miss Josephine Earl.

In the same spacious grounds and on the site of the old barn belonging to the original estate, is the residence of Mrs. Henry Lambert who is a direct descendant of Captain Ford of the third generation from him.

The original home of Captain Ford was moved to the corner of School and Pawtucket streets, across the road from



## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

its early resting place and became the home of Elisha Ford, who kept for many years the little store adjoining it. Both house and store are practically unchanged in appearance since the early days.

The shop and yard were used for storing the immense quantities of shad which had been taken from the Merrimack river during the Spring fishing season and which were afterwards sold to the neighboring farmers who spread them on the land to enrich the soil.

The name of Ford is strongly associated in so many ways with the history of our city that it will not soon be forgotten. In the little Burying Ground opposite Pawtucketville Church is found the grave of Captain John Ford, to reach which, his funeral procession passed over the old bridge of which he had been one of the chief owners and promoters.

Next below the Ford House is the Spalding Homestead, now owned by the Molly Varnum Chapter D. A. R. This house was built about 1760 by Robert Hildreth, and during the early history of the house it seems to have changed owners quite frequently, having been the property of seven different men in succession before it was purchased as a home by Mr. Joel Spalding in 1790, thirty years after its erection. One of its owners was Captain Ford, who lived in the adjoining house.

At one time the house was known as the Davis Tavern and was largely patronized by the raftsmen and loggers who floated their logs down the river from the New Hampshire forests, and stopped at this tavern for rest and refreshment before starting again on the river-drive to the sea.

Following the Merrimack river along its restless way, we remember that where the French-American Orphanage now stands, formerly the home of Frederick Ayer on Pawtucket street, was once the wigwam of Wannalancet, and around the deep pools at Pawtucket Falls gathered the Merrimack Valley Indians in the fishing season. Their camping grounds spread



## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

over a large part of what is now Pawtucketville, and where the Textile School now stands was one of their favorite resting places. Numerous arrow-heads and other Indian weapons, also stone mortars and curious cooking utensils have been found near its site.

A century and a half after all but the memory of the Indian dwellers on this spot had been swept away, a Mr. Phineas Whiting had both a residence and a grocery store on the lower corner of School and Pawtucket streets.

When one passes by the immense buildings of the French-American Orphanage today, with its beautiful grounds ornamented with religious symbols, it is hard indeed to realize that scarcely a hundred years ago this corner was the rendezvous of the hardy farmers of Dracut and Chelmsford, coming here to trade with the keen old proprietor who boasted that everything needful could be found in his store from molasses to a parlor-organ.

Passing by what, at a later period, were the Cheever and Fletcher Farms, we pause a moment at the bounds of the latter to note that on Worthen street, which passes through the original Fletcher Farm, was born in 1832, James Abbott McNeil Whistler, the noted artist, in the house now the property of the Lowell Art Association.

Above the junction of the Concord and Merrimack rivers where Central Bridge is located, was maintained for many years, a ferry, well known in local history as Bradley's Ferry. It was in use according to the early records in 1737 and probably many years previous to that date. It was owned and managed by Joseph Bradley who also built Barron's Hotel situated near the ferry landing. The old house is still standing on First street and was known for many years as the Centralville House.

Following the main highway to Dracut, near what is now West Fourth street, one passes the former residence of Ezra

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

Worthen, from whom Worthen street received its name, and who, the early mill records state, "came from Amesbury to East Chelmsford to have charge of the Merrimack Manufacturing Company." Mr. Worthen was a contemporary and intimate friend of Paul Moody and Kirk Boott and his home was a stately and substantial mansion befitting his position.

Farther up Bridge street is a building which for many years has been known as the "Wire Works," but in its days of pristine grandeur stood where now is the Varnum Grammar School and was the famous "Dracut Academy."

The old academy has guarded within its walls, as pupils, men and women who afterwards became notable influences in the life of both State and Nation.

The stately home at the corner of Myrtle and Sixth streets, in past years known as the "Water Cure," was utilized as a boarding house for out-of-town pupils to the Academy in the height of its popularity.

On Hildreth street, although not on its original site, is the "Hildreth Homestead," built in 1784 by Lieutenant Israel Hildreth, who served his country both on sea and land during the Revolutionary War. His aged father Elijah Hildreth closed his days in this house and here was born Dr. Israel Hildreth, for many years the leading physician in all this region. Hon. Fisher Hildreth, who held many important state and town offices, was of the fourth generation of the Hildreths who had lived in this old homestead, and the name of Hildreth stands out pre-eminent in the Colonial and Revolutionary life of Dracut.

Retracing our footsteps, we pass the ancient "Hildreth Burying Ground," given to the town of Dracut by Lieutenant Hildreth and which up to the present day has been the final resting place of many members of this historic family.

Near where are now the immense manufactories of the Boott Cotton Mills stood in 1674 an humble log cabin. Here, the

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

Indian magistrate Numphow, held a monthly court, and to this cabin, every May for many years, came Judge Gookin who used it as his court house in the settlement of the important grievances and offences among the Indians of Wamesit.

Over a hundred years ago, a few steps from what is now Merrimack Square, was the Nathan Tyler house, surrounded by far-reaching and fertile fields. The farm was of large extent embracing land now occupied by the Carpet Mills and reaching beyond Palmer street. It is difficult to transform the scene of Lowell's greatest activity to-day with its rush of electric cars, its busy mills and crowded lodging houses, and the constant tread of hurrying feet, into the quietness of the "green pastures and still waters" that the same sun shone down upon a century ago. The house, which was one of the most pretentious of its time, was built by Mr. Nathan Tyler from lumber prepared by him at his sawmill at Pawtucket Falls. Here, Mr. Tyler, with his goodly family of seven sons and three daughters, dwelt for a number of years, and today his numerous descendants are among Lowell's most honored citizens. Finally Mr. Tyler sold a part of this estate to the originators of the Merrimack Manufacturing Company and built another residence at Middlesex Village which still bears the title of the "Tyler Homestead," and is now occupied by Mrs. Samuel Tyler and her daughter Miss Susan Tyler, the ladies who were the donors to this city of the magnificent gift of Tyler Park.

After the purchase of the Nathan Tyler home by the Merrimack Company, the old house was converted into a hotel and became known as the "Old Mansion House." Captain Jonathan Tyler had the hospitable charge of the "Mansion House" for a term of years, and under his management the hotel became of great importance in the life of the new and thriving town, and was the scene of many a festive gathering, but the increasing encroachments of the mill properties in its neighbor-

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

hood eventually caused the removal of the old hotel. Part of it stands now at the corner of Salem and Dane streets, a reminder of "Auld Lang Syne."

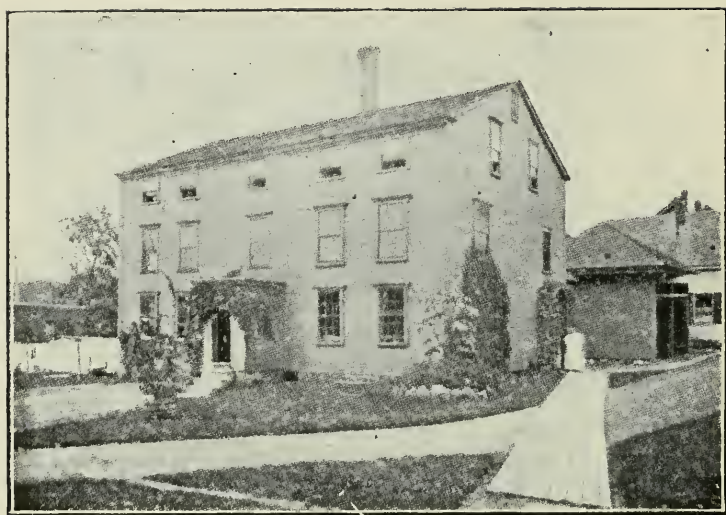
Farther up the hill on the site which St. John's Hospital now occupies and of which it has become a part, was a stately structure in the early days of Lowell, which at different epochs in its history was called the "Gedney House," the "Old Yellow House" and the "Livermore Mansion." The land on which it stood was part of the original grant to Madam Winthrop, wife of Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts. The house was erected about 1750 by one Timothy Brown, the heavy lumber for its construction being obtained of Captain Ford at his sawmill near Pawtucket Falls, but the interior wood work was prepared in England and then shipped to this country.

After changing owners once or twice, the estate came into the possession of Phillip Gedney, a former British Consul who had left his home for political reasons and who chose this place for his residence, and lived here for a number of years.

Then after varying experiences, one of which was the use of the old house as a tavern, it found another purchaser in Judge Edward St. Loe Livermore. At this period, the estate consisted of about two hundred acres of land, which, enclosing the imposing mansion standing on a high elevation laid out with spacious lawns and avenues, made a truly magnificent home for its dignified owner.

Judge Livermore named his estate "Belvidere," a title which now embraces all the surrounding suburb. The members of Judge Livermore's family were distinguished for brilliancy of intellect and strength of character. But the memory of the gifted yet erratic daughter of the house, Harriet Livermore, who was immortalized by Whittier in "Snow-Bound" will make it impossible for Lowell residents to ever allow the fame of the old





THE OLD LIVERMORE HOUSE

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

"Livermore Mansion" to sink into oblivion. These are the words written of her by Whittier :

"A women tropical, intense  
In thought and act, in soul and sense!  
She blended in a like degree  
The vixen and the devotee!  
Since then, what old cathedral town  
Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown!  
What convent gate has held its lock  
Against the challenge of her knock!  
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,  
She watches under Eastern skies,  
With hope each day renewed and fresh,  
The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,  
Whereof she dreams and prophesies!"

Following the Merrimack river along what is now known as Andover street, we find at its junction with the Old County Road, the Moses Worcester farm. This farm was purchased in 1748 of Samuel Hunt by Moses Worcester and a portion of it has remained in the possession of his descendants to this day. Near what was the site of the original farm house is the residence of Mrs. Richard W. Baker and family, of direct descent from Moses Worcester. On the opposite side of the road and in a remarkable state of preservation is the house built in 1802 by a grandson of the original owner, Eldad Worcester. The Worcester family bore a prominent part in the church as well as in the town affairs of Tewksbury.

Turning off from Andover street is what is now known as Clark Road, but was for many years in the early history of Tewksbury but a bridle path to the church and settlement. This road runs through the territory which in 1691 Samuel Hunt bought from the heirs of Madam Winthrop. In the old records is found a copy of the deed from Joseph Hunt to Captain Jonas Clark of Clark's Tavern, who bought one hundred acres of this territory in 1737 as a gift to his son Thomas. The original Clark house was in a field west of Clark Road and from its door Lieutenant Thomas Clark responded to the alarm of the 19th of



## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

April and led the company from North Tewksbury to the scene of action. In 1790 a more pretentious house was built on Clark Road, and this property has been continually in the possession of the Clark family since its original purchase. The old house, guarded by sheltering trees, gives promise to withstand the ravages of time for many years to come. In this home Lieutenant Thomas Clark ended his days and now rests from his deeds of valor in the old Clark Burying Ground, but a short distance from the house.

In Colonial times, the Hunt Garrison House stood on the hill overlooking the farm, but the only vestige that remains of its history is a hearth-stone brought from its ruins and now standing in the yard of the old Clark House.

Farther down this historic old road are two picturesque homes over which a century has passed, apparently leaving them unchanged from their early days:—the residence of the late Joshua Clark, and the Hunt Homestead. Until a very recent date the Hunt property has not been out of possession of the Hunt family since the original purchase by Samuel Hunt in 1691 from the estate of Madam Winthrop.

Retracing our steps to the Concord river, we stop a moment to gaze on its placid surface, trying to picture to ourselves the period when its banks were the rendezvous of Indians who came in tribes to gather fish from its generous bosom. The good Eliot and Gookin are said to have taken advantage of these fishing seasons to improve the spiritual and moral condition of the Indians, and from Massic Island they told their dusky listeners of the "Great Father." Not only the Indians but the English settlers found in the waters of the Concord and Merrimack an abundant supply of fish—the rivers at that time teeming with salmon, shad and alewives. But instead of the rude devices used by the Indians, the fish were taken in great numbers



## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

in nets and seines. Alas! the old fishing spots are no more available and their traditions are all that remain.

Before leaving the Belvidere side of the river, we must speak of Fort Hill Park, which received its name from the fact that Wannalancet, the last Sachem of the Merrimack Valley Indians, built a fort here as a protection against his enemies, the Mohawks. For many years this park was a yearly rendezvous of the Indians, and it is interesting to remember when visiting this spot, where landscape artists with most consummate taste and skill have ornamented the grounds with shrubs and foliage, that here, once the painted savage in war-like array, crouched in ambush behind a rocky barricade, waiting an attack from deadly foes, and that where now are conventional fountains and a brilliant display of cultivated flowers, the Indians drank the water bubbling from the ground, and lay at rest on the grassy banks of the hill.

Nearly a mile from the old Concord Ferry, following the line of what is now Central and Appleton street, stands the Eliot Congregational Church, built near the site of the log cabin where the Indian preacher "Samuel" taught his crude ideas of the Christian's God, to his tribesmen, in weekly meetings, and where the missionary John Eliot preached with fervor and eloquence to the Red Men of the "Great Father" over all.

Continuing on an old road that at one time touched Hale street there is found a massive boulder that marks the site of the "Old Rock Tavern," once the homestead of Benjamin Butterfield. The Butterfield farm extended on both sides of the old Chelmsford Road for a long distance, and embraced a large portion of what is now known as Ayer's City. This property has descended through several generations of Butterfields and tracts of it are still held by members of the family.

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

Not far from this locality, on what is now Gorham street, is the original Osgood House, still owned by descendants of the first settler of that name in Chelmsford.

When on the memorable April 19th, 1775, the alarm was given "through every Middlesex village and farm, for the country folk to be up and to arm," a young man went out from this house to give his life, if need be, in the cause of Freedom.

At the junction of Gorham and upper Central streets is a small square now called "Davis' Corner." One must, indeed, possess a vivid imagination to picture the old farmhouse and fertile acres owned by one Elisha Davis, in the early days of Chelmsford, which gave this place its present name.

The original little old building was replaced in time by a more modern farmhouse which is still visible although surrounded by tenements and stores.

One wonders, as the noisy crowds pass to and fro, if the old house remembers the peaceful quiet of the "long ago."

Rushing along as if anxious to cast off old memories and become a part of the busy present is an ancient water-way of this neighborhood, now widely known as "Hale's Brook."

On its banks in 1790, Moses Hale who had taken to wife a daughter from the Davis farmhouse, built the first woolen mill ever started in Middlesex County. The building is still standing but is now used as a tenement house. This small beginning was the nucleus of what became in after years, large and prosperous industries, including the woolen mill, a lumber business and the manufacture of gun powder.

As his business prospered, Mr. Hale also built in this vicinity a large mansion, afterwards owned by Joshua Swan and his heirs, and which remained a prominent landmark in that locality until about two score years ago. The house was three stories high with brick ends and heavily timbered. People gathered from all the neighboring towns to view the raising of

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

the immense structure. Tables were spread on the extensive grounds for their refreshment and the "raising" was made a time of general festivity. The event was considered of great importance at that date and has passed into the annals of Lowell.

In later years, Mr Oliver Whipple, the son-in-law of Mr. Hale became associated with him in business and continued the same when Mr. Hale retired. The powder business was enlarged from time to time and finally reached the efficiency of producing a million pounds of gunpowder in one year. The fame of these works grew to such an extent that the Governor of Massachusetts and his Council made an official visit to them.

Mr. Whipple shipped cargoes of gunpowder to the East Indies and other foreign markets, and it became necessary to have a base of supplies near Boston. Accordingly Mr. Whipple purchased Spectacle Island in Boston Harbor as a place of storage for the gunpowder. He also built a road from his factory, still known as "Whipple's Road," connecting with the old "Boston Road," over which his teams could pass without interruption on their way to Boston.

In these days of rapid transportation by means of rail-roads and automobile trucks, it may be interesting to note the means employed by Mr. Whipple in sending this most dangerous product of his factory to Boston.

At midnight, when there was but little passing and small danger of collision, immense four horse loads of gunpowder were started on their journey. The hoofs of the horses were muffled in bagging and cotton pads so that their iron shoes should strike no sparks from the stones in the roads and thus ignite the powder.

Slowly and steadily the great horses marched down the unfrequented by-ways, as far as possible, until they reached Boston, from which point the gunpowder was taken, a boat load at a time, to the island in the harbor.

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Mr. Whipple was the principal factor in developing the southwestern section of our city. His former home is still standing on Moore street and occupied by his descendants.

On the opposite side of Moore street from the Whipple Homestead, is a little one story cottage which was the original home of the Moore family through whose farm Moore street was laid out. The cottage is of colonial date and sent forth defenders of our Independence in the Revolutionary War.

A short distance from Hale's Mill following the "Old Salem Road" is Parker street, which has an interest for us in that it is one of the oldest highways within the boundaries of Lowell and also because the "Old Marshall Tavern" is on this street. It stands on a slight elevation, and with the extensive grounds in the rear and the ancient poplars in front, differs but little in appearance from the time of its erection about 1790, and it is not difficult for us to fancy the stout country teams, loaded with produce and driven by sturdy farmers who have left their homes weary hours before, stopping at the hospitable entrance for "refreshment for man and beast" ere they continue their journey to Salem. The old house has resounded with laughter and hearty greetings, and even now has a mellow cast of countenance as if musing over some of the old jokes. But alas! hosts and guests have all gone long ago beyond that "bourne from which no traveller returns." The "Old Marshall Tomb," across the road from the tavern, opened its portals to receive all that was mortal of "mine hosts," and stood for over a century a reminder of old fashions and customs, but the hand of the destroyer has reached even that and the old tomb is no more.

A short by-path leads from the old tavern to Chelmsford street. It was in this neighborhood that Benjamin Pierce lived until manhood. His home was with his uncle whose house stood near the site of the farm belonging to the Orlando Blodgett estate, and whose farm embraced a generous extent of the sur-

## OLD HOMES AND BYWAYS

rounding country. When the signal of alarm was given April 19th, 1775, Benjamin Pierce was ploughing in a field off Powell street. Hitching his team of steers to a stump, he took his gun and started for Concord on foot. He served through the Revolutionary War, and afterward went to New Hampshire to live, and was twice elected Governor of that state. He often revisited his early home, taking great pleasure in showing the historic stump on Powell street.

As we follow the old winding Chelmsford Road, passing by the boundaries of the original Chamberlain, Pierce and Coburn farms, we can almost see the "embattled farmers" of over a century ago, as they hurried along its grassy way to join their friends and neighbors in the great struggle for liberty.

But at "Golden Cove" we again find the "Old Highway to the Merrimack" which warns us that we have at length completed, however falteringly and imperfectly, the circuit of our city.

"Old things indeed have passed away," yet they cannot be quite forgotten, for though they have "no speech nor language," yet are their voices heard in the streets.









# Acadian Exiles About Lowell



## Acadian Exiles About Lowell

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When we read in history of the deportation of the Acadians in 1755, which is called unto this day "The Great French Derangement" by the natives of Nova Scotia, and on which the familiar and pathetic poem of Longfellow's "Evangeline" is founded, the thought rarely occurs to the dwellers of this busy materialistic city of Lowell that in any way are we connected with that saddest of episodes, and the most tragic and brutal outrage that mars the annals of the history of the New World.

And yet in the ships that sailed away from Boston Harbor bearing troops under the command of Colonel Winslow, whose ostensible object was to resist the further encroachments of the French in Nova Scotia, were men from all the adjacent towns of what is now Lowell, men who serving loyally their country and King were yet kept in ignorance that the real object of the expedition was to devastate and lay waste the homes of fair Acadia. On the transports that returned from that fatal expedition were the unfortunate French Neutrals, torn from their fatherland, their prosperous farms and fertile vineyards, to be dispersed among the English colonies. In nearly all of our neighboring towns were placed numbers of these unfortunates, and before all memory and all historical proof of their existence among us fades entirely away, it has been thought wise to revive as far as possible the incidents of their visitation among us that future generations of our children may read with a clearer meaning, the never to be forgotten tale of the fair and sorrowing Evangeline.

## ACADIAN EXILES ABOUT LOWELL

Perhaps a brief account of the condition, politically and socially, of affairs in Nova Scotia prior to the abduction of the Acadians may partially explain, although not justify, this almost unparalleled act of the English Government.

The name Acadia is derived from the French Acadie, the title given in one of the early grants to a river in what is now Nova Scotia. In 1603 there is a record of a settlement commenced by the French in this territory and Monsieur De Ments the Governor, gave the name Acadia to all of what is now Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. In 1621, this district was granted by charter to Sir William Alexander of the Kingdom of Great Britain, who renamed the territory New or Nova Scotia, but in poetry and song the original name of Acadia still lingers, although in the many disputes between the colonists of England and France the territory changed masters many times and the boundaries were widened or narrowed according to the respective views of the opposing parties.

The most definite settlement of the disputes, skirmishes and warfare between the hostile colonists of England and France was made in 1713, by the memorable treaty signed at Utrecht when Acadia and Newfoundland were ceded to England by France, but the right of France to fortify Cape Breton and still maintain fisheries on the coast of Newfoundland were embodied in certain articles of this treaty and reads as follows:—

“All Nova Scotia or Acadia with its ancient boundaries as also the city of Port Royal, the island of Newfoundland with the adjacent islands, the town and island of Placentia and whatever other places in the island are in possession of the French, shall from this time forward, belong of right wholly to Great Britain. But the island of Cape Breton as also all others both in the mouth of the river St. Lawrence and in the Gulf of the same shall hereafter belong to the King of France who shall have liberty to fortify any place or places there.

## ACADIAN EXILES ABOUT LOWELL

The provisions of this treaty caused great rejoicing in the province of New England, but brought dismay to the hearts of the French inhabitants of Nova Scotia—the Acadians, as they seemed to be delivered into the hands of their ancient foes, the English.

Immediately after the cession of this territory to England, the newly appointed English Governor tried fruitlessly several times to induce the Acadians to take an oath of allegiance to England, but this they refused to do, fearing that they might be called on to take up arms against their French brethren in case there was war between England and France. The English government did not care to use force in the matter as they feared that the Acadians might leave the island and go to Cape Breton and strengthen the French possessions there and to this course the French Governor of Louisburg was urgently entreating the Acadians. But they were attached to the fertile farms which for several generations had descended from father to son as was the patriarchal custom of their forefathers and they dreaded removal to a new country. But the Acadians assured the French Governor if any attempt were made to interfere with the free exercise of their religion they would abandon all their possessions and go to Cape Breton. In 1719, six years after the treaty of Utrecht, the Acadians consented to take what might be termed a qualified oath of allegiance, upon the most solemn assurance that “they should not be compelled to bear arms against the French and permitted the free exercise of their religion,” and from this time forth they went by the name of the “French Neutrals.”

It was but natural that the English authorities of Nova Scotia, for so long the avowed foes of France, should regard with suspicion the French inhabitants of the island:—the savages from whose inroads and attacks the English colonists had suffered so bitterly were sworn allies and friends of the French:—they

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were also of an alien and hated religion:—and entirely under the influence of the Jesuit missionaries sent to them from Louisburg, and speaking a language almost unknown to their Governors, they became the objects of distrust and jealousy.

The writer of this article has been at some pains to secure the English point of view of affairs at this period and in a History of the Provinces, published in London by Richard Brown, Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, has been found a very unprejudiced and impartial record. He says “When Colonel Phillips was appointed Governor of Nova Scotia, he was greatly surprised on his arrival in that province to find that the French inhabitants lived as if they were still subjects of France, that they were furnished with priests from Louisburg, and kept up a regular communication with their countrymen in Cape Breton.”

The fact of the Acadians being in constant communication with the French in Canada and the other settlements, was probably the cause of more and more rigorous measures being enacted in regard to their government. In time they were debarred from holding any office of trust in the colony, robbed of their right of representation and formally excluded from the right of adjudication in the courts of justice.

But so amicably did this gentle people live among themselves, that as respected each other, such measures made but little difference; they were accustomed to put their title deeds and wills into the hands of their pastors for safe keeping, and in any dispute among themselves to be governed by his advice. In spite of the harsh measures meted out to them, the Acadians as a people seemed disposed to submit cheerfully to the government that they now comprehended was to control them. Indeed with many of them, there was an indignant feeling at being deserted by their French King and irrevocably made over to their ancient enemy and this feeling disposed them to submit more cheerfully. And for the next thirty years, in spite of certain injustices and harassments, they prospered and multiplied.

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But the tranquillity which the colonies had enjoyed since the treaty of Utrecht was broken in 1744 by the war between England and France brought on by the inter-meddling of England with affairs in the continent, and the French Governor of Louisburg at once made an attack on Nova Scotia but was unsuccessful in his designs. It was supposed by the French commander that all the Acadians would join in this attack on the English, but such was not the case. The English historian to whom I have formerly referred says, "The Acadians had lived so long under the mild and judicious sway of the different English Governors that they had no desire to change and remained quiet on their farms, and, during the siege of Louisburg and the four years' war, ending in the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle, there is no record to show that the Acadians took any prominent part on either side, but remained true to the name which they had styled themselves—"The French Neutrals."

The first effect of the Treaty Aix-la-Chapelle was the attempted settlement by the English of Nova Scotia and the foundation of Halifax. Although the English had now been in formal possession of the island for over thirty years, no important settlements had, so far, been attempted by them, but Great Britain had now devised a scheme for effecting English settlements along the coast and in the interior by an offer of land to all officers and privates retired from the army or navy of Great Britain. The English government agreed to transport them and their families free of expense to Nova Scotia, maintain them for a year, and supply the new settlers with arms to defend themselves. The project was so alluring that in a short time over three thousand English arrived in Nova Scotia. On their arrival the Acadians at once manifested a very friendly disposition towards them. They sent deputies to the new Governor acknowledging their subjection to the British Crown but at the same time declining to take an oath of allegiance without reservation. The

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Indians also sent in their chiefs to make their submission to the new government.

But this peaceable disposition of the Acadians and Indians was very displeasing to the Viceroy of Canada who disapproved very strongly of the establishment of a strong British post in the immediate vicinity of Louisburg, and through his instructions, the Indians harassed the new settlers and skirmishes occurred intermittently between the English and Indians for the next three years. In one instance a French officer from Canada came down with a force of Indians and erected a fort on a neck of land connecting Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and impressed five hundred of the Acadians to defend the fort. These Acadians were pardoned by the English Governor as it was proven that they had acted under threats from the French commander and entreaties from the missionaries, but this very unfortunate occurrence gave plausible cause for added distrust of the Acadians.

The English historian records that "the Governor and English settlements of Nova Scotia would never again feel secure now that the Acadians had once broken through their neutrality, that the British government had dealt very fairly with them, never compelling them to take up arms against the French although subjects to the Crown." And the Governor also states that "the English settlers along the coast and interior would now live in daily dread of attacks from the Indians, who were the strong friends of the Acadians, now that the peace had once been broken." Meanwhile, the French from Canada made constant incursions into Nova Scotia, erected forts, harassed the settlers, and made strong encroachments on the territory of the island.

Finally an expedition from Massachusetts, although at the expense of the Crown, was undertaken to drive the French out of the English possessions in Nova Scotia.



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Lieutenant Colonel Moncton of Nova Scotia was designated by the King to have charge of the expedition, one battalion of which was in command of Colonel Winslow of Marshfield, Massachusetts, while a Colonel Scott had command of the second battallion, and in May, 1755, this fleet sailed from Boston Harbor. The avowed object of this expedition was perfectly legitimate in its scope and successful in its results:—the resistance of the encroachments of the French in Nova Scotia and their expulsion from the island.

But behind the avowed object of the English expedition, known but to those high in authority, and carefully concealed until time was ripe, was a scheme so cowardly and brutal in its design and development that it seems almost impossible to credit the records of history.

At this period, 1755, the Acadians numbered some thousands; they were the earliest European occupants of the country and had dwelt in it now for over two hundred years. Their manner of life had gradually changed, for they had deserted the pursuits of hunting and fishing so loved by their ancestors and turned their labor entirely to the cultivation of the soil. The immense meadows which they had secured from the sea were covered with flocks of sheep and dròves of cattle. A record states they possessed 60,000 head of horned cattle and most families had several horses although the tillage was carried on by oxen.

The thickly clustered villages of thatched roof cottages and substantial farm houses sheltered a frugal, contented people. Happy in their seclusion they conducted their affairs in the simplest manner. No locks were needed for their doors "no tax gatherer counted their folds; no magistrate dwelt in their hamlets." Living in love their lives glided on "like rivers that water the woodlands, reflecting an image of heaven."

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Do we not all remember Longfellow's description of Acadia?

"In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas,  
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand Pre  
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward,  
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without number.  
West and south there were fields of flax and orchards and cornfields,  
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain,  
There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.  
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of hemlock,  
There in the tranquil evenings of summer when brightly the sunset  
Lighted the village street and gilded the vanes on the chimneys.  
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles,  
Scarlet, and blue, and green with distaffs spinning the golden  
Flax for their gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttle within doors  
Mingled their sound with the whirl of the wheels and the songs of the  
maidens.  
Anon from the belfry  
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village,  
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending  
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.  
Thus dwelt together in love, these simple Acadian farmers;  
Dwelt in the love of God and man,  
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows  
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners.  
There, the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance."

There is no doubt but that the rapidly increasing possessions of the Acadians aroused the envy of the English settlements and the demands made on the Acadians for supplies and labor were constantly increasing both in amount and in harshness. Was their property demanded for the public service? It must be yielded immediately or "the next courier would bring an order for military execution upon the delinquents." Did they delay in bringing fire wood at the bidding of their masters? "If they do not do it in proper time" was the harsh mandate of the Governor, "the soldiers shall absolutely take their houses for fuel."

Perhaps the utter submission of the Acadians but increased the bitterness of the English towards them: certainly the final drastic action of the government could have been but the culmination of years of hatred for it showed a degree of inhumanity almost unequalled in the history of any nation.

For it is thought now by the best students of that period that this last expedition against Nova Scotia instigated by

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Governor Shirley but hid the plan already formed by the parent government in England acting on Governor Shirley's advices to seize all the possessions of the Acadians, remove them from their homes and disperse them among the English colonies, and that Colonel Winslow who had charge of one battalion in the company was aware of these plans before he sailed from Boston.

Such inhuman measures must of necessity draw forth some apologies and the English had certain accusations against the Acadians which are as follows:—

1. That they would not take the oath of allegiance without the qualification that they would not be compelled to bear arms.
2. That though affecting the characters of Neutrals they had been guilty of furnishing the French and Indians with provisions and intelligence of the English movements.
3. That five hundred of them had assisted in holding a French fort.

With these pretexts for an excuse the decision was made by Governor Lawrence of Nova Scotia acting with advices from England procured by Governor Shirley of Massachusetts Bay, that the Acadians should be driven from the homes they loved, and scattered as exiles over the whole breadth of the continent. They were to be treated as captives, and as captives were to be sent out to live among the English.

The execution of this decree was allotted to the New England forces with Colonel Winslow as commander. The apologists of Colonel Winslow claim that he was but acting under commands as a soldier under his King. But in Haliburton's *History of Nova Scotia* is found this passage: "At a consultation held between Colonel Winslow and Captain Murray it was agreed that a proclamation should be issued at the different settlements requiring the attendance of the people at the respective posts on the same day, which proclamation should be so ambiguous in its nature that the object for which they were to

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assemble should not be discovered," showing conclusively that Colonel Winslow was one of the original planners of this most diabolical scheme.

And from Winslow's manuscript journal in possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society, in his own handwriting are these words: "The Neutrals were to be collected by strata-gem or force, as circumstances might require and no attention was to be paid to remonstrances or memorials from any desirous to stay, but every person was to be embarked if possible according to instructions."

And on the 30th of August, 1755, a general proclamation was made ordering all the males of the French settlements both old and young men and all the lads ten years of age to assemble at the church at Grand Pre at three o'clock in the afternoon then and there to hear his majesty's orders communicated. Some, on the news of the proclamation fled in fear to the forests, but on the day appointed four hundred and eighteen unarmed men gathered in the church which had been occupied by General Winslow as his headquarters, while without, their wives and children awaited the issue of this strange conference.

The doors of the church were closed and from the lips of General Winslow the sentence of the doomed people was slowly but firmly pronounced. "It is his majesty's orders," such were the words, "and they are peremptory that the whole French inhabitants of these districts be removed. Your lands and tenements, cattle of all kinds, and live stock of all sorts are forfeited to the Crown, and you yourselves are to be removed from the province, and I hope that in whatever part of the world you fall, you may be faithful subjects, a peaceable and happy people. Meanwhile you are the King's prisoners and will remain in security under the inspection and direction of the troops I have the honor to command."

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The imprisoned captives listened to this announcement at first in unbroken silence then a loud wail of anguish echoed through the building. Twenty of the prisoners were allowed to go forth to spread the news of the proclamation but the others were kept prisoners in the building for four days while their homes were being dismantled by the soldiers and such household effects as were allowed them loaded on the ships. Finally on the fifth day, broken spirited and broken hearted, the men were marched down to the shore where stood in frightened groups their wives and children, and for the last time all raised together their voices and sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions:—

“Sacred Heart of the Saviour  
O, inexhaustible fountain  
Fill our hearts this day with strength  
And submission and patience.”

By order of Colonel Winslow, the prisoners in the church were drawn up in lines of six deep and the young men were ordered to march first on board the vessels; but in frenzied despair they refused to be separated from their parents and companions and at the point of the bayonet, obedience was enforced. Next the fathers were commanded to embark and then the mothers and little children, and as the fleets left the harbor, the broken hearted captives could watch the flames as they destroyed their homes and villages, set on fire by command of Colonel Winslow. A large number of the miserable Acadians in the different districts escaped. The rest, seven thousand in number were scattered from New Hampshire to Georgia. About a thousand of these Acadians arrived at Boston at the opening of the winter and the provincial legislature did what it could to alleviate their sufferings.

In the archives of the State House, Boston, are two folio volumes relating exclusively to the French Neutrals and the following report is copied from them.

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November, 1755, Governor's Council:

"A committee was appointed to examine into the condition of the French in the transports now lying in the harbor of Boston and to report what they think proper for this Court to do therein."

The report of the committee shows that the condition of the transports were unhealthy and unsanitary from over crowding, short allowance of food and scarcity of water; many were sick: and the committee recommended that Governor Lawrence of Nova Scotia should be held responsible for support of the French on board the transports.

The Acadians that landed in Boston were finally apportioned to the different counties in Massachusetts—Middlesex County at one time harboring one hundred and fifty-six of them.

On the State Records is spread the following report:

"The Committee appointed by the Great and General Court to apportion and distribute the French Neutrals among the several towns in the County of Middlesex have effected the same in manner as set forth and have caused them to be placed in the respective towns to which they have been aligned and have notified the selectmen of each town of the number and names of the persons aligned them as their proportion which is honorably submitted by S. Danforth, Wm. Brattle, Samuel Livermore, James Russell—Committee."

The Acadians on being sent to these different towns made a terrible mistake for which they expiated in sorrow and suffering. They declared that they were prisoners of war and refused at first to work. So, many were sent at once to the poor houses or bound out as town's poor. As soon as they realized their condition, they were glad indeed to do anything towards their support, but the unaccustomed labor, the strange customs and their fear of the alien race made their labor all the more difficult and only in rare cases were they self-supporting. Each town kept a record of supplies furnished to these exiles and sent the



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same to the General Court for reimbursement, which records are kept in the State Archives and from these accounts the author has been able to secure an almost perfect list of the Acadians apportioned to the different towns. But the towns adjacent to Lowell interest us the more particularly.

From the report of the town clerk of Billerica an original copy of which is on the rolls of the Great and General Court, is this item: "1755, a bill from the merchant Nathaniel Davidson of Billerica, exceeding nineteen pounds for sundries furnished an Acadian family, man and wife and seven small children and his kinswoman and child." In this particular case, the original French name seems completely lost. The town must have anglicized the name, for the family appears in all the records by the name of King.

In 1758, Mr. Davidson agreed to provide for this family, one year for thirty pounds, and a bill to the state is rendered "for providing for John King, his wife and children and his sister Ann King and child for the year preceding."

In November, 1759, is recorded a petition from the selectmen of the town of Billerica asking relief from the further maintenance of this family. These facts are stated: "The family had been sent to Billerica in January, 1755, John King had then six children and Ann his kinswomen had a child born soon after. She afterwards married a John Mitchell who had been quartered in Londonderry but joined the colony in Billerica. King's eldest daughter had also married and had a child; there were now fourteen members of the Acadian family and all were in a pitiable state of dependence."

A family of Acadians by the name of Lapadere were assigned to Wilmington. Unhappy exiles indeed were they in this town, if the records speak the truth. Placed in a ruined house, open to all weather, scanty rations and but little fuel, a

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sick mother and rough usage by the authorities, the Acadian family registered as John Lapadere, wife and four children had fallen indeed into evil days.

In Westford, the three Acadians registered on the town records must have been self-supporting as there is no account from the town for supplies granted them.

Their names as recorded are:—

Mary Maud Robinshaw, aged 44.

Mary Richard, aged 11.

Eliza Richard, aged 17.

It is too true that in many of the towns even in Massachusetts, the unhappy Acadians suffered from poverty and ill-treatment. In the light of today, when so many great humanitarian movements are in order, to assist the aliens coming to our shores, it is almost impossible to understand the spirit of intolerance and bigotry exhibited towards these people of another race, by the New England colonists. It is true that in 1755 we were still under the dominion of England, and through her influence, everything French had become hateful and suspected. Also the towns in which these exiles were placed were almost wholly ignorant of the former peaceable and prosperous conditions of the Acadians, of the barbarity with which they had been torn from their homes and made a people without a country. To our struggling New England towns the Acadians were but a part of the hated French, whom they were called on to support, a "town charge," a troublesome burden, to be made useful if possible, but always a burden.

Recorded in the folios at the State House are many petitions to Governor Shirley of Massachusetts Bay, from the Acadians praying relief from their sufferings. Some of these petitions are in French and others in good English, showing that the exiles had found friends to write for them, but all bearing the burden of woe. The beginning of all had the same form:—



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"Petition from the Neutrals to the Honorable, His Majesty's Council of the Province of Massachusetts Bay." In one of the petitions in cramped feeble handwriting and broken English, were these phrases: "Being strangers in a strange land, defenceless and alone, and having no where to go for relief," we pray, etc.

But it was with a keen sense of gratification that no trace was found of neglect or abuse of the Acadians in the towns from which Lowell was formed, Chelmsford, Dracut and Tewksbury, and yet these towns harbored within their midst for many a month, numbers of the Neutrals.

On the records of the State House are nearly four full pages of accounts and transactions between Chelmsford and the exiles committed to her charge, seventeen in number.

Jean Landrie, a man sixty-two years of age.

Mandlin, his wife, sick, unable to work.

Paul Landrie, his son twenty-two years of age.

Charles Landrie, twenty years of age.

Simeon Landrie, eighteen years of age.

Asam Landrie, sixteen years of age.

Charles Frawhorn, a man twenty-nine years of age.

Titheroe, his wife.

Mary, a daughter six and one-half years of age.

Mandlin, a daughter five and one-half years of age.

Joseph, a son four years of age.

Grigwine, their son three years of age.

Margaret, a daughter 7 months old.

Joseph Landrie, twenty-six years of age, a son of the said

Jean.

Mandlin, his wife, twenty-six years of age.

Mary Mandlin, daughter, 5 months old.

Jean, their son, two years of age.

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The names signed to the bills asking reimbursement to the town of Chelmsford "for the support of the French" are:—David Spaulding, David Proctor, Henry Spaulding, Jonas Adams, Andrew Fletcher—Selectmen of Chelmsford.

The town of Dracut had within its borders at different dates, twelve of the French Neutrals. The first trace of them in the town is the following record:—

"May 18, 1757. It is on this date voted by the town of Dracut to give the French family Sarah, Mary and Betty Landrie, three of the French family that belong to Dracut, twelve dollars to transport them to Quebec, upon these instructions, that the money shall be lodged in Mr. Peter Fry's hand, one of the Overseers of the Poor and not to be delivered to them unless they do actually go off and pay their passage for transporting them to Quebec.

EPHRAIM HILDRETH, *Town Clerk.*"

At a later date is found this additional entry:—

"The Province of the Massachusetts Bay, Debtor to the Town of Dracut for Substance of the French family from the 5th day of March, 1760, to the 15th day of August, 1760, consisting of nine persons. The man and his wife aged about sixty years and six daughters between the age of twenty and twenty-nine years and one about thirteen years. The man is not able to perform much labor nor his wife and one of the daughters is not in an estate of health to perform much labor.

EPHRAIM HILDRETH,	} Selectmen	
JONATHAN COBURN,		of
EPHRAIM BARRON,		Dracut.

Tradition claims that this family occupied the old Fox house not far from the Milton Fox farm. When the old house was being remodeled, there were traces found of French occupants and foreign utensils.

As authorizing the fact that Tewksbury also cared for a number of the Acadians is found a record in the State Folio, giving eleven as the number there.

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“Middlesex, Tewksbury, June 10, 1757. The account of the town of Tewksbury Entertaining a French family sent from Nova Scotia, viz:— Francis Meers, his wife and nine children, eleven in number from the 25th day of February last until the tenth day of June instant, which is fifteen weeks at three dollars per week, amounting to the sum of 13 pounds and 10 shillings lawful money, for meat, bread, drink, house rent, fire wood, soap and salt. We the subscribers, the selectmen of Tewksbury Honorably Pray to have the above account allowed. Thomas Marshall, John Chapman, Isaac Kittredge—Selectmen of Tewksbury.

Also the following:—

“To the honorable Samuel Danforth, Esq. In pursuance of your Honorable Warrant to us directed of the 18th of July. We have removed all the French Neutrals that were in our town to the town of Redding on the 31st of July, 1760, and their names are as follows: Francis Meers and Jane his wife, his sons and daughters—John, Francis, Paul, Christopher, Boffeal, Rosalie, Elizabeth, Priscella, Mary. Another of the daughters, Hanna, has been gone out of town for some months and when she will return is unknown to us.

Wm. Brown, Wm. Kittredge, Steven Osgood, James Thorndike, Wm. Hunt—Selectmen of Tewksbury.

It is not the scope of this paper to trace the after life of these exiles either from these towns or from all Massachusetts. It is probable that when Canada was ceded to the English in 1763, many emigrated to that province, others remained in New England and inter-married with the colonists. The weak and sickly, unable to bear the hardships of an alien life, faded away. Perhaps as they lay ill or dying their thoughts and hearts yearned for Acadia and their happy home life, as did Marguerite of whom Whittier wrote.

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"But her soul went back to its child time; she saw the sun o'erflow  
With gold the basin of Minas and set over Gaspereau.  
She saw the face of her mother; she heard the song she sang,  
And far off faintly, slowly, the bell for vesper rang.  
Done was the work of her hands;  
She had eaten her bitter bread;  
The world of the alien people  
Lay behind her, dim and dead."

The writer of this article has compiled from the original "Rolls of Colonel Winslow's Regiment sent against Nova Scotia in 1755," the names of the men from our adjoining towns who were in that expedition, feeling that before all memory of their deeds fades from among us, this record should be made. The original "Rolls of the Regiment" are in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society and it is through the courtesy of that society that such a compilation was secured. And in reading these names it must be understood that no censure or blame is connected with these private soldiers, for

"Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do or die."

### FROM DRACUT

DANIEL CLOUGH, 45, Laborer  
JONAS EMERY, 45, Yeoman  
JOSEPH TREADWELL, 37, Laborer  
JOHN EMERY, 18, Laborer  
FRANCIS KNOWLTON, 23, Laborer  
SIMON WOOD, 21, Tailor  
ANTHONY EMERY, 22, Laborer  
RICHARD BARRON, 21, Laborer

### FROM TEWKSBURY

JOSHUA FROST, 18, Laborer  
EBENEZER FISKE, 20, Laborer  
TIMOTHY DUTTON, Laborer  
BENJAMIN CLARK, Laborer  
SAMUEL WINCH CORPORAL, 43, Husbandman  
WILLIAM OBER, 20, Laborer

### FROM CHELMSFORD

ELEAZER STEVENS, 24, Laborer  
JOHN WARREN, 21, Laborer  
JOHN BLAISDELL, 22, Cooper

## ACADIAN EXILES ABOUT LOWELL

JACOB FARMER, 41, Laborer  
BENJAMIN BYAM, 21, Cooper  
THOMAS BYAM, 40, Cordwainer  
EZEKIEL DAVIS, 18, Laborer  
JEREMIAH FROST, 19, Laborer  
BENJAMIN CHAMBERLAIN, 18, Laborer  
BENJAMIN FLETCHER, 17, Laborer  
ABRAHAM CUMMINGS, 20, Smith  
NATHANIEL BUTTERFIELD, 42, Husbandman  
EBENEZER KITTREDGE, 23, Husbandman  
NEHEMIAH VARNUM, 19, Laborer  
DANIEL STEVENS, 18, Yeoman  
NATHANIEL FOSTER, 25, Husbandman  
SAMUEL FOSTER, 25, Husbandman  
ANDREW HUTCHINS, 25, Husbandman  
SAMUEL COWDRAY, 25, Laborer  
BENJAMIN KEMPS, 22, Cooper  
ABNER KEYS, 17, Blacksmith  
JOHN PARRY, 20, Housewright

The tragedy of the Acadians' exile is almost forgotten and only the faded pages of early records show that once among us, a few of the ill-fated Acadians found not a home, but a stopping place. And this fragment of history which has been written herein is but a connecting link between our modern life and the home of Evangeline.

"This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it  
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the  
hunter."

Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers:  
Waste are these pleasant farms and the farmers forever departed;  
Scattered like dust and leaves when the mighty blasts of October  
Seize them and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean,  
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand Pre."









Lowell's Share in the Battle  
of Bunker Hill



# The Battle of Bunker Hill

and those who participated therein from the towns  
from which Lowell was formed.

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The story of the Battle of Bunker Hill has been told until it has become more familiar to its American readers and audiences than any other conflict of the Revolution. In truth, the deeds of the knights of the "great days of old," riding forth to redress all wrong, have not been the theme of more historic tales and songs of valor. And no more chivalrous spirit incited the hearts of the Knights of King Arthur's Round Table, as they sallied forth to defend the faith and honor of their country, than fired the hearts of our plain countrymen, as they offered themselves a willing sacrifice on the altar of freedom nearly one hundred and two score years ago.

No subsequent battle of the Revolution possesses an equal interest with this early struggle for independence and liberty. The unparalleled audacity of the seizure of the heights of Charlestown, in the presence of a numerous and powerful army and fleet of the British, the firmness with which the Americans awaited the attack, the terrible loss inflicted on the enemy unexampled on any later battlefield of the Revolution, and, finally, the curious spectacle of undisciplined men without a leader known and respected as such, contesting with a veteran army and experienced officers, are marked features that have rendered the Battle of Bunker Hill, for all time, a grand and memorable deed. While the story of this battle has been told by so many people and in such complete detail that it is not possible in this paper to offer any new facts in regard to the battle, yet it may be possible to present oft-told ones in such an order as to assist in a better understanding of both the causes and effects of the conflict.

## THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

The people in all the English speaking colonies in America had for many years been growing restive under the exactions and restrictions imposed by the arbitrary ministry of George III, and after the passage of the Boston Port Bill in 1774, and other kindred measures, a sullen obedience gave way to a passive resistance on the part of the people, which was succeeded, as the preparations of the British government to enforce their demands became more evident, by a resolution to oppose force with force, and carefully and systematically the colonists endeavored to provide the necessary means for successful opposition.

Early in 1774, in the annals of nearly all the towns of Massachusetts, will be found records of votes to buy powder, to provide flints and bullets, to organize the militia, to raise "Minute Men" whose duty it should be to respond instantly to any alarm that the British troops were to make any demonstration to leave Boston; and most important of all, to choose "Committees of Correspondence" who should keep in touch with committees of other towns, and assist in the spread of knowledge of things concerning the welfare of the colonies.

After the British governor, General Gage, had dissolved the "Assembly" in 1774 and declared it a "treasonable body," and the Assembly immediately adjourning to Concord, passed resolutions declaring General Gage an enemy of the province and advising against recognizing his authority in any way, there was absolutely no one central power in Massachusetts. But the state resembled a collection of small republics, bound together only by a common interest against a common oppressor. Such was the condition at the time of the Lexington alarm, April 19th, 1775, the events of which are familiar to us all.

But before the alarm and excitement of that battle had passed away, it had become the unanimous judgment of the people of this state that the English ministry had finally begun

## THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

a War of Oppression, and that Middlesex County was to be the scene of the first war-like resistance of the American colonies, and even while the fighting was going on, on the memorable 19th of April, up and down the historic highway, messengers were dispatched over the great routes, to Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Hampshire, with the news that war had actually begun.

Every town, every obscure village, reached, was in turn electrified.

The entire population sprang to arms, nor were those whose kindred had been slaughtered at Lexington more determined to avenge the blood poured out there, than were their sympathizing brethren in the other colonies of New England.

The Provincial Congress met almost immediately after the Battle of Lexington and Joseph Warren was elected president pro tempore. It was resolved that Massachusetts should raise an army of 13,000 men immediately.

Circulars were sent out to the different towns of this state by the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, elected about this time, calling out the militia and urging by all means the enlistment of men to form the army, and to send them forward without delay to the camp at Cambridge which had now become the headquarters of the American army with General Artemus Ward as Commander-in-Chief. The other American forces were to be at Roxbury with General Thomas, and Richard Gridley was elected chief engineer by the Provincial Congress.

Circulars were also sent to the other New England colonies asking that as many troops as could be spared should be sent to the assistance of Massachusetts.

Connecticut was so prompt in its answer to the appeal that a few days after the 19th of April she had no towns not represented in her army which consisted of 6000 men to be under the command of Brigadier General Joseph Spencer and

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Brigadier General Israel Putnam; but gallant Israel Putnam had not waited for a commission before he was in action. He was ploughing in his field when he first heard of the butchery of the Americans at Lexington. Prompt as when he dragged the wolf from its den, he stopped not to change his clothes or unyoke his oxen, but leaped to his saddle and galloped towards Concord which he entered on the 21st of April, on the same horse he had mounted the afternoon before at Pomfret. On the next day he wrote back to Connecticut to hasten the troops to Cambridge where he at once went, ready for any call that might be made upon him. General Spencer was sent to join the camp at Roxbury.

Rhode Island voted to raise 1300 men to join and co-operate with the forces of the neighboring colonies under the command of Brigadier General Nathaniel Greene.

In New Hampshire, when the tidings reached Derryfield, now Manchester, that the Americans were fighting the British soldiers, Colonel John Stark started on horseback for Lexington; his name like General Putnam's was known to almost every household in New England. New Hampshire furnished troops which were divided into three regiments under Colonels Stark, Reid and Poore. Later General Folsom took command and joined General Ward at Cambridge.

In Vermont, fiery Ethan Allen was eager to march towards Concord, but he paused to execute that wonderful enterprise which secured for the Americans the formidable fortresses of Ticonderoga and Crown Point with all their military stores, and gave additional courage to the hearts of the Provincials.

The official returns of the army thus gathered are so inadequate and inaccurate that it is impossible to ascertain with precision, its numbers. The "grand American Army" as it was called in the newspapers of that date probably consisted of about 16,000 men.

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Rev. Mr. Gordon, historian of the Revolution, and at this time chaplain of the Provincial Congress published a return of the army present at Cambridge in June giving a total of 7,644 officers and men, but he warns us that the returns are untrustworthy.

The army was so peculiarly situated, each colony having its own establishment, supplying its own troops with provisions and ammunition, and directing their disposition, that the only element of uniformity seems to have been the common purpose that called them together.

On April 20th General Ward took command of the American forces and called a council of war. There were present Generals Ward, Heath and Whitcomb, Colonels Bridge, Frye, James Prescott, William Prescott, Bullard and Barrett. Later, as stated before, the neighboring colonies sent regiments under their local leaders. The officers and the army were directly responsible to the Committee of Safety, who had almost dictatorial powers on all military matters. No one had more influence at this time than Dr. Warren, president of the Committee of Safety. He did wonders in preserving order among the men, for there was great difficulty in maintaining discipline. However, in a short time, each colony made separate provision for its troops, establishing their pay and appointing and commissioning their officers.

General Ward was authorized to command only the Massachusetts and New Hampshire troops; the Brigadier Generals of the other colonies not recognizing General Ward as Commander-in-Chief until after the Battle of Bunker Hill. This last fact alone sufficiently indicates the confusion that existed as to rank among the officers of the different colonies, and, in addition to this want of subordination so vital to success in military operations, the army was inadequately supplied with muskets, bayonets and powder; probably one-third of the Massa-

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chusetts troops being without muskets as late as the 16th of June. Even tents and clothes were lacking to protect our men; and no measure of bravery or patriotism could make up, in a day of trial, for all this defencelessness. Yet this ill-appointed army was not entirely unprepared for an encounter. Many officers and men had served in the French War; a martial spirit had been excited by the frequent trainings of the "Minute Men," while the habitual use of the fowling-piece made these raw militia superior to veteran British troops in aiming the musket. They were superior to them also in character, being mostly substantial farmers and mechanics, who had left their homes, not to make war a trade, but because they were animated by a fresh enthusiasm for liberty. The army also reposed great confidence in its leaders. General Ward had served under Abercrombie, was a true patriot and a cautious soldier. General Thomas was an excellent officer and much beloved. Gridley had won laurels at Louisburg as a skilful military engineer. Putnam was of intrepid valor and great popularity, Prescott of great bravery and military skill, and Stark independent and daring. The American army to oppose General Gage was gathering from the 19th of April to the middle of June. It was distributed along a line nine miles in extent from Boston to Medford, but mainly concentrated in two partially entrenched camps at Roxbury and Cambridge, and was in daily expectation of being attacked by the well armed, well disciplined, well officered British army in Boston, and this siege duty told severely on men who were not used to camp existence, for discipline had not yet counteracted the demoralizing tendencies of army life. Ill fed, poorly armed, and with no one recognized leader, it was no wonder that the men became restless, dissatisfied and eager for action of any sort, and during the sixty days between the battle of Lexington and Bunker Hill, the Americans did make several threatening demonstrations against the British,



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two of the most important being the march under General Putnam, made with considerable parade through Charlestown, another being a skirmish between the American troops at Chelsea and a British schooner and marines at Noddle's Island.

From the evening of the Lexington fight, General Gage was shut up in Boston. The patriots kept a strict guard on every road; no parties were permitted to pass out, no provisions to pass in, and thus the citizens of Boston were cut off from intercourse with the country and were suddenly deprived of the necessaries of life. Also civil war was at their doors, the sundering of social ties, the burning of peaceful homes, the butchery of kindred and friends, and all was uncertainty in regard to their own fate. The murmurings of the citizens became so loud that General Gage finally asked for an interview with the selectmen of Boston, for he did not feel safe under existing circumstances, fearing that in case of attack from the American troops the citizens of Boston would join with their friends without, and he would thus have a double danger to fight. At the meeting with the selectmen General Gage made the following proposition:—"That if the men of Boston would lodge their fire-arms in Faneuil Hall, they, with their families and possessions, might leave the town, and those who chose to remain in the city might rely on his protection." The town voted to accept this proposal. But the exodus from Boston became so great as to alarm the British commander, as he feared an attack if all the patriots left, and his agreement with the selectmen on one pretext or another was shamefully violated. At length passes were refused altogether or arranged so that families were divided, General Gage being very averse to allowing women and children to leave Boston, as he thought they contributed to its safety. Thus did the brave British Commander-in-Chief shelter himself behind the skirts of the first Daughters of the American Revolution.

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The inhabitants of Charlestown also were deeply distressed through the Siege of Boston, and so many left the town that it was practically deserted.

The British officers and men confined in Boston chafed under the enforced inactivity; they longed for an opportunity to regain the prestige lost on the fatal 19th of April. But General Gage was too wise a commander to risk his army by acting on the offensive until it was stronger, so his operations were directed to putting Boston in as good position as possible before the attack which he daily expected, and his engineers were kept busily at work while the reinforcements from England and Ireland were arriving. Some of these reached him about the last of May when the *Cerberus* came into port with Generals Howe, Clinton and Burgoyne on board. Soon General Gage had under his command 10,000 of the best troops in the British Empire. Several of the regiments bore a distinguished and ancient record. Besides infantry there was a battalion of Royal Artillery and a regiment of Dragoons, effective in all the manual of arms. The generals and most of the troops had seen service. Howe was known to be brilliant and dashing, Clinton, cool and sagacious, Burgoyne, brave but over-confident.

On the 12th of June General Gage issued his memorable proclamation, arrogant in its tone and grossly insulting to the people. It declared martial law, pronounced those in arms to be rebels, but offered pardon to all who should lay down their arms, excepting only Samuel Adams and John Hancock.

This proclamation aroused the temper of the Provincials to white heat. About this time General Gage was advised to make a sally out of Boston and send troops to occupy both Charlestown and Dorchester Heights, both of them military positions of the greatest importance to the occupation of Boston, which favorable positions were also known to the Provincial leaders, and news having reached the American army that

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the British had decided to fortify Dorchester Heights on Sunday, June 18th, the Committee of Safety gave orders to General Ward to forestall this design if possible. So in accordance with these instructions, General Ward issued a command that on Friday, June 16th, measures should be taken to fortify Bunker Hill on Charlestown Heights.

Colonels Prescott's, Frye's and Bridge's regiments with two hundred Connecticut troops under Captain Knowlton of General Putnam's brigade, were to proceed at once to the Cambridge camp, taking with them all the entrenching tools, and place themselves under the immediate command of Colonel William Prescott of Pepperell. About nine o'clock on the evening of June 16th, the memorable march to Charlestown Heights began, Colonel Prescott, accompanied by Colonel Richard Gridley, the chief engineer, at the head of the troops, about 1200 in number. The orders from General Ward to Colonel Prescott were in writing, and were to the effect that the detachment should proceed to Bunker Hill, build fortifications to be planned by Engineer Gridley, and defend these works until they should be relieved, the orders not to be communicated until the detachment had passed Charlestown Neck. When the men reached this point they were joined by General Putnam and the whole body marched to Bunker Hill. Here Colonel Prescott called his field officers around him and communicated his commands. The order was explicit as to Bunker Hill, but Breed's Hill, nearer Boston, seemed better adapted to the object of the expedition and the daring spirit of the Americans, and it was finally decided to first throw up intrenchments on Breed's Hill, and afterwards Bunker Hill should also be fortified in order to cover a retreat if necessary.

When the men reached Breed's Hill, Colonel Gridley marked out the plan of fortifications and at twelve o'clock at night the men began to work, a few being sent to patrol the

## THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

vicinity in order to give the alarm if surprised. But to the thousand men or more, working so continuously through the night, came the cheering cry from the patrols—"All's well." Almost silently was the redoubt formed and the breastworks thrown up, as the shore was almost a continuous chain of British sentinels and the British fleet lay near by.

But it was early morning before the fortifications were discovered. They were first seen by the English man-of-war, the "Lively," and she immediately opened fire on the intrenchments. The noise of the cannonade awoke the British camp at Boston who gazed in surprise on this daring defiance of the Americans.

Inside the earth-works the men were protected from the enemy and were not materially disturbed by the balls, but kept on at work, strengthening the intrenchments and raising platforms inside of them to stand upon when they should be called on to fire. Early in the day a private named Asa Pollard of Billerica was killed; Colonel Prescott, afraid of the effect on the men, ordered him buried at once. "What, without prayers?" said the astonished chaplain and he insisted on performing service on the first victim of the day, but Colonel Prescott ordered the men to disperse and the body was buried at once.

About noon the fortifications on Breed's Hill were considered finished, and General Putnam ordered Colonel Prescott to send the intrenching tools at once to Bunker Hill and to throw up a breastwork there; but, by this time, the shipping in the harbor had taken a position where they raked the hill with their cannon shot, making it impossible to continue the work.

As the day advanced the men at the redoubt suffered from the intense heat, and from the lack of food and drink, and Colonel Prescott was urged to send a request to General Ward for this force to be relieved by other troops, but Colonel

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Prescott promptly refused, saying that "the men who had raised the works, were the best able to defend them, and those who had the fatigue of the labor should have the honor of the victory," but he finally agreed to send a special messenger to General Ward for reinforcements. General Putnam, who seemed to be the inspiring spirit all along the line, had already told General Ward of the extreme need of additional troops, and of refreshments for the men at the redoubt, and finally the regiments of Colonels Stark and Reed, with other regiments, were sent to reinforce Colonel Prescott. General Ward was so unwilling to weaken his force at Cambridge until he knew which point the British meant to attack that much time was lost in confusion and vacillation, and the men at the redoubt began to lose heart, but Generals Warren and Pomeroy, coming among them as volunteers, gave new courage to the men faint from the lack of food and sleep, and General Putnam also, at this time, rode on the field again to share in the labor and peril. The earth-works which protected the entrance to the redoubt were extended and strengthened, a low stone wall surmounted with a rail fence some two hundred yards in the rear and extending to the water's edge was utilized, and to close the gap between the end of the stone wall and the end of the earth-works, rail fences were erected close together, and the space between filled with the new-mown hay, lying in the field.

Long before this, the British troops in Boston were observed to be in motion. Early in the morning, General Gage had called a council of war and contrary to the advice of General Clinton determined to dislodge the Americans from Breed's Hill by a front attack, and about twelve o'clock on June 17th the British troops began to embark for the scene of battle in charge of Lieutenant General Howe and General Pigot, and landed at Moulton's Point about one hour later, when the ships were sent back to Boston for reinforcements for the British.

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What must have been the feelings of the wearied Provincials at the redoubt when they saw this magnificent display of disciplined British troops with scarlet uniforms and glittering weapons, forming into line, while the battleships of the enemy made an imposing background!

Just before the battle began the American troops were disposed in the following manner:—at the redoubt, Colonels Prescott's, Frye's and Bridge's regiments with Colonel Callender's artillery, while Lieutenant Colonel Robinson of Westford and Captain Wyman of Stark's regiment were stationed behind stone walls and fences. At the famous "Rail Fence," which was under General Putnam's immediate command, were Colonel Stark and Colonel Reed of New Hampshire, Captain Knowlton of the Connecticut troops, while Brown of Tewksbury, Nixon, Little and Doolittle's regiments were near.

The British commander, General Howe, divided his army into two divisions, one under himself to march towards the "Rail Fence," the other, under General Pigot, towards the redoubt. With courage and confidence in themselves and contempt towards the "American peasants," as Burgoyne styled the colonists, the British marched forward, but their steady progress was broken by the rows of new-mown hay, the stone walls and the marshy ground near the brick-kilns. The British met with but little resistance from the Americans as they proceeded, as the Provincials had been cautioned not to fire until the British were within a few rods—"Wait until you see the whites of their eyes"—"Pick out the officers"—"Aim at the handsome coats," were the commands of Colonel Prescott and General Putnam. At the required distance, the Americans opened fire! The result was terrible and the slaughter of the British immense. Alarmed and staggered at this unlooked for reception, General Howe ordered retreat. The Americans were jubilant. But General Howe soon rallied his troops and decided



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to advance in the same manner as before. In the meantime, Charlestown had been set on fire. Amidst the smoke of the burning town, and the cannonade from the ships, the British troops proceeded slowly again towards the charge, stepping on rows of their slain comrades. Again the Americans awaited them, again did the deadly fire pour out, and the British fell back.

But the ammunition of the Provincials was falling low, a few cannon cartridges constituting the whole stock of powder on hand. These were opened and the powder distributed. The British were so long in rallying that the Provincial officers thought that they might not attack again and Colonel Prescott spent the time in inspiring his command with hope and courage, while General Putnam tried to bring order out of the confusion that reigned on Bunker Hill because of the lack of reinforcements.

Finally the British commander, General Howe, resolved to make the third assault, four hundred marines having landed to assist him, and General Clinton coming to arouse the courage of the troops. He now ordered the men to reserve their fire, relying on their bayonets, and make their main attack on the redoubt. A demonstration was made against the rail fence. Generals Howe, Clinton and Pigot led against Breed's Hill. They soon broke through the breastworks and drove the defenders into the intrenchments. Colonel Prescott saw that the redoubt must soon be carried, but he continued to give his orders steadfastly and coolly.

But the American fire slackened for want of ammunition and the stones that were hurled, betrayed their weakness to the British. The redoubt was soon successfully scaled and the conflict carried on, hand to hand, with swords and bayonets; the enemy continued to enter the intrenchments and Colonel Prescott gave the order to retreat. The British, with cheers,

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took possession of the works and immediately formed and poured a destructive fire upon the retreating troops, doing deadly destruction. At this time the brave and gallant General Warren was killed.

In the meantime the Americans at the "Rail Fence" maintained their ground with great firmness. The force here did a great service for it saved the main body, who were retreating in disorder from the redoubt, from being cut off by the British. When it was perceived at this point that Colonel Prescott had left the hill, the men gave ground, but with more regularity than could have been expected of troops who had been no longer under discipline.

The whole body of Americans were now under retreat over the top of Bunker Hill, where General Putnam endeavored to stem the confusion and make another stand—but in vain.

About five o'clock the British troops with a great parade of triumph, took possession of the same hill that had served them for a retreat on the 19th of April.

Apprehensions were entertained on both sides of a renewal of attack in the night, but the loss of the Peninsula had damped the ardor of the Americans, and the loss of men depressed the spirit of the British. The battle of Bunker Hill was ended; the British colors flew over Prescott's redoubt; four hundred and fifty patriots and fifteen hundred British killed, wounded and missing; eighty-nine British officers slept in the dust. But patriot courage and endurance were found to equal patriot enthusiasm. Technically the battle was lost—morally it was won; for where Warren fell, a Nation was born.

We, residents of this fair city of Lowell may well feel a thrill of patriotism and a pride in the achievement, and claim a share in the glory of those who fought that day at Bunker Hill.



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For the three towns which gave so liberally of their territory to form this prosperous city of ours, gave also most generously of their men and means, on that memorable day.

Chelmsford, Dracut and Tewksbury, our foster-mothers, stand forth a trio of sisters proud of the stainless record of their sons on Bunker Hill.

And the century and nearly two score years seem to have passed away, as we tread the ancient highway in our city over which many of these men hastened on their way to join the camp at Cambridge. And can we not picture them, eagerly hurrying forward, through the beautiful spring and summer days, under the leafy trees, and beside the winding streams gaily bedecked with our own familiar flowers, leaving behind them, their dearly loved cottage or homestead, and marching out to certain danger and probable death?

One wonders if that beautiful season of our somewhat bleak New England, when all Nature is at her best, may not have unconsciously inspired them and added to their determination to repel the usurper from her soil, and leave this dear and beloved land, a free heritage to their posterity.

In the Battle of Bunker Hill, Chelmsford men were conspicuous for their bravery and acts of personal daring. Captain John Ford, whose homestead and saw-mill were on what is now Pawtucket street, was in command of the Chelmsford company, consisting of sixty men. He was attached to the regiment of Colonel Ebenezer Bridge, the son of the patriotic minister of Chelmsford, and was stationed at the camp at Cambridge under General Ward. When the preparations for the battle began, Captain Ford obtained permission from the general to withdraw his company privately, and march directly to reinforce the troops at Bunker Hill. On their way they were met by General Putnam who ordered Captain Ford to draw the cannon which had been deserted by Colonel Callender

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at the foot of the redoubt, into line at the "rail fence." Captain Ford's men objected on the ground that many of them had never seen a cannon before, but being encouraged by the captain, they finally moved them into the desired position. When the British advanced towards the "rail fence," these cannon manned by a portion of Captain Ford's company, opened fire on them with great effect; the rest of his men were ordered not to use their muskets until the enemy were within eight rods of the line, but Joseph Spalding of Chelmsford could not resist the temptation to discharge his musket before orders were given, and so doing, hastened the attack. On his tombstone in the old graveyard at Chelmsford, is this inscription: "He was at the Battle of Bunker Hill where he opened the battle by firing upon the enemy before orders were given."

Another company under command of Captain Benjamin Walker was attached to Colonel Bridge's command and included ten Chelmsford men. The following tables contain the names of those who belonged to Chelmsford and engaged in the Battle of Bunker Hill:—

### OFFICERS:

Col. Ebenezer Bridge  
Lieut.-Col. Moses Parker  
Major John Brooks

Adjutant Joseph Fox  
Quartermaster John Bridge  
Surgeon Walter Hastings  
Asst. Surgeon John Sprague

### 27th Regiment under Captain John Ford:

Lieut. Isaac Parker

Ensign Jonas Parker

### SERGEANTS:

Moses Parker  
Daniel Keyes  
Parker Emerson  
Jonas Pierce

### CORPORALS:

John Bates  
Benjamin Barrett  
William Chambers  
William Cambill

### DRUMMER:

William Ranstead

### FIFER:

Barzilla Lew—Dracut

### PRIVATES:

John Keyes  
Alexander Davidson  
John Chambers  
Samuel Britton  
Moses Parker

Francis Davidson  
Oliver Cory  
Samuel Marshall  
Joseph Chambers  
Joseph Spalding

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Benjamin Pierce  
David Chambers  
Ebenezer Shed  
Samuel Wilson  
Nathaniel Foster  
James Drum  
Isaiah Foster  
Benjamin Parker  
Benjamin Farley  
Enoch Cleaveland  
Benjamin Butterfield  
Samuel Howard  
Moses Esterbrook  
Robert Auger  
Elijah Haselton  
John Glode  
Jesse Dow  
Joseph Spalding

Isaac Barrett  
Reuben Foster  
Timothy Adams  
John Parker  
William Rowell  
Benjamin Hayward  
Thomas Bewkel  
James Alexander  
Nathaniel Kemp  
Solomon Keyes  
Noah Foster  
Jonas Spalding  
Josiah Fletcher  
James Chambers  
Silas Parker  
Robert Richardson  
William Brown  
Solomon Farmer

### Captain Benjamin Walker's Company:

Charles Fletcher  
Joseph Blood  
Zaccheus Fletcher  
Joseph Osgood  
Joshua Durant

Thomas Marshall  
John Adams  
Robert Tier  
Ebenezer Gould

Lieutenant Colonel Moses Parker and Captain Benjamin Walker of Chelmsford were mortally wounded at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Dracut also has a proud record on this historic field of battle.

Captain Peter Coburn's company in Colonel Bridge's regiment did memorable service on that day. This company was stationed at the redoubt; it numbered fifty-four men, and they were hotly engaged during the action. Captain Coburn's clothes being riddled with balls. It is related that just as Colonel Prescott gave the order to retreat, a British officer mounted the breastworks and exclaimed "Now, my boys, we have you," and in answer to this boast, Captain Coburn picked up a stone, hurled it at his head and knocked him down.

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The muster-roll of Captain Peter Coburn's company of Dracut at the Battle of Bunker Hill is as follows:

### CAPTAIN :

Peter Coburn

### LIEUTENANTS :

Josiah Foster  
Ebenezer Varnum

### SERGEANTS :

James Varnum  
Micah Hildreth  
Phineas Coburn  
William Harvey

### CORPORALS :

John Hancock  
John Taylor  
Jesse Fox  
John Barron

### PRIVATES :

Benjamin Barron  
John Bradley  
Daniel Clough  
Timothy Davis  
William Emerson  
Timothy Foster  
Jesse Fox  
Josiah Fox  
Gardner Gould  
Abijah Hills  
Nehemiah Jaquest  
Solomon Jones  
David Lindsey  
Jonathan Richardson  
John Roper  
Barnabas Stevens  
Elijah Tuttle  
John Varnum  
Joshua Varnum  
Henry Barron

Moses Clement  
Benjamin Crosby  
Seth Didson  
Zebediah Fitch  
Abijah Fox  
Thomas Gardner  
Jonathan Hamblett  
John Holt  
Samuel Jenners  
Nathaniel Kittredge  
William Parker  
Moses Richardson  
Amos Sawyer  
John Thissel  
Joseph Tuttle  
Jonas Varnum  
William Varnum  
Jonas Whiting  
Solomon Wood  
Samuel Whiting  
Thomas Wright

In other companies were :

Moses Barker  
Moses Parker, Jr.  
William Brown  
Smith Coburn

Joseph Hibbard  
Chester Parker  
Barzilla Lew, Colored

Three men from Dracut were mortally wounded or killed at Bunker Hill:

Benjamin Crosby

John Thissel

Joseph Hibbard

Tewksbury also manifested a spirit of patriotism and sacrifice not less than her sister towns in the great struggle for Independence.

The men from Tewksbury, who were engaged in the Battle of Bunker Hill, were in the companies of Captain John Harnden of Wilmington and Captain Benjamin Walker of Chelmsford.

## THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL

Those in Captain Harnden's company being:

John Burt  
William Harris  
Joshua Thompson

Moses Gray  
Samuel Manning

In Captain Walker's company:

LIEUTENANT:

John Flint

CORPORALS:

Phillip Fowler

SERGEANTS:

Luke Swett  
Eliakim Walker

David Bayley  
Peter Hunt

DRUMMER:

Phineas Annis

FIFER:

Isaac Manning

PRIVATES:

John Bayley  
Jonathan Beard  
John Dutton  
Amos Foster  
Jonathan Frost  
Jonathan Gould  
John Hall  
Nehemiah Hunt  
Josiah Kidder  
Eliphalet Manning  
Joseph Phelps

Samuel Bayley  
John Danderly  
Timothy Dutton  
Jacob Frost  
Joseph Frost  
Jonathan Gray  
John Howard  
Paul Hunt  
Asa Laveston  
Daniel Merritt  
Hezekiah Thorndike

Taken prisoners or killed at Bunker Hill:

Phillip Fowler

Jacob Frost

The lists of the names of the men from Chelmsford, Dracut and Tewksbury who fought on that memorable 17th of June, have been compiled from the original records, and it seems but a slight recognition of their services to preserve these lists, which form a roll of Honor of the men who fought on Bunker Hill. The men who lived and loved and labored within our original boundaries, and whose patriotism on that day, made it possible for our fair city of Lowell to have existence.









# The Story of Wannalancet



## The Story of Wannalancet

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The story of Wannalancet, the last sachem of the Merrimack Valley Indians, is one of the most pathetic in our early colonial history.

The loyalty and faithfulness displayed by Wannalancet in his dealings with the English settlers deserved a better reward, yet the halo of romance that still lingers around his memory may compensate, in a degree, for the neglect bestowed on him during his life.

About two hundred and eighty years ago all that part of New England bordering on and including the Merrimack Valley, from Newburyport to Lake Winnepesaukee, and from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to beyond Worcester, Massachusetts, was in the possession of a powerful tribe of Indians whose chief or sachem was Passaconaway.

This tribe was in divisions and had names according to the localities in which they lived—as the Pennacooks, Pawtuckets, and Wamesits, but all were under the authority of this one sachem.

At the time that the English came to this part of the country, Passaconaway was a very old man, yet he was considered the most powerful and influential sachem in all New England.

The tribe of which he was chief, was constantly being harassed by the continuous attacks of their enemies, the Tarrantines on the East, and the Mohawks on the West, and Passaconaway had the wisdom and intelligence, to understand that a friendly alliance with the English would be the surest defence that he and his people could have against the hostile Indian tribes.

## THE STORY OF WANNALANCET

Also, he had the foresight to see the utter hopelessness of any attempt on the part of his tribe to subdue and conquer the English, and acting from these motives, Passaconaway made a friendly alliance with the English colonists, giving up to them large tracts of land, and promising to live in love and peace with them. But tradition says that the proud spirit of Passaconaway at times regretted the peaceful policy that he had adopted, for the suspicions and fears of the early Massachusetts colonists, were easily excited against the red men and they inflicted cruel wrongs upon the unoffending Passaconaway and his tribe.

In 1642, it was rumored among the English that a conspiracy was forming among the Indians to crush the colonists, and a company of men was sent out to capture the principal Indian chiefs. Passaconaway and his tribe were innocent of any such intent, but despite their proofs of innocence, Wannalancet, the son of Passaconaway, was taken by the party and most insultingly and cruelly led to Boston by his captors, with a rope around his neck. Wannalancet was kept in prison for some months; he was then set at liberty and restored to his tribe. But this outrage upon the son of Passaconaway made a deep impression on the mind of the old chief and led him to doubt for a long while the sincerity of the English colonists towards him, but in 1648, John Eliot, a missionary to the Indians, visited this tribe at one of the fishing seasons, when many of the Indians had gathered at Pawtucket, and cemented and strengthened the friendship between the Indians and the English.

At this time also, John Eliot told the Indians of the one only and true God, and, at the close of his message, Passaconaway announced his conversion to the "God of the English."

The old Sachem continued in his belief in the "Christians' God" during the remainder of his life, and, as a proof of his

## THE STORY OF WANNALANCET

sincerity, he offered John Eliot a permanent abiding place with his tribe, that the Indians might benefit by the teachings of the missionary.

In 1660, Passaconaway being then of very great age, made his farewell speech to his people as it was customary for the Indian sachems to do, on nearing the end of life.

Passaconaway bade "Good-by" to his people at Pawtucket and his closing words were most eloquent and pathetic.

"Think, my children, of what I now say: I commune with the Great Spirit. He says: 'Tell your people, Peace, Peace is the only hope of your race. I have given Fire and Thunder to the pale faces for weapons. I have made them plentier than the leaves of the forest and still shall they increase. These meadows, they shall turn with the plow; these forests shall fall by the axe. The pale faces shall live upon your hunting grounds and make their villages upon your fishing places. The Great Spirit says this and it must be true. We are few and powerless before them. We must bend before the storm. Peace, Peace with the white men is the command of the Great Spirit, and the wish, the last wish of Passaconaway."

The old chief lived but a short while after his farewell speech and his son Wannalancet became Sachem about 1669.

It was the custom among the Indian tribes to give their young men names indicative of their characters, and that Wannalancet must have possessed a very peaceful disposition is shown by the meaning of the title given him on reaching manhood,—“Wannalancet,” which in the Indian speech means “breathing pleasantly.”

For years before he became sachem, he had been on friendly terms with the English, and as chief, he continued to follow his father's advice.

During Passaconaway's life, Concord, New Hampshire, then called Pennacook, was the principal residence of the Sachem,

## THE STORY OF WANNALANCET

but Wannalancet chose Pawtucket, now called Lowell, as his headquarters.

His first act of any importance was to build a fort for protection against the Mohawks, his ancient enemies. This fort was built by Wannalancet on what is now known as Fort Hill Park. This fort was used many years not only for defence, but as a rendezvous or camping place for a part of the tribe.

Of course, Indians being a migratory people, changed their homes according to inclination or season; their houses were birch bark tents or wigwams and could easily be erected in any suitable place. During the planting season, their wigwams were clustered where the land gave best crops; at the fishing season near the pools in which the salmon, shad and alewives hid, and in the winter season near the hunting grounds.

Wamesit which included what is now called Lowell, except Centralville and Pawtucketville, was rich in fertile and luxuriant lands, and where now are paved streets, residences, stores, and factories, the Indians had waving fields of corn.

During the fishing season the Indians gathered in great numbers around the rapids, which we call Pawtucket Falls. Wannalancet, having a wigwam where the French-American Orphanage now stands, and Wannalancet street bears its name because the old Chief once encamped so near it. Many old Indian weapons, arrow-heads, and even the crude cooking utensils of the Indians have been discovered in the neighborhood.

Massic Island in the Concord river where Stott's Mills are located, was another favorite fishing spot of Wannalancet's tribe and to these two places, John Eliot and Gookin, the missionaries, were wont to come in the fishing seasons to tell the savages of the God of the English, and, at one of these services, Wannalancet, as did his father Passaconaway before him, renounced his heathen worship to accept the God of the white man.

The words of Wannalancet on this occasion were very

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characteristic: "Sirs, you have been pleased for years past, in your abundant love, to apply yourselves particularly to me and to my people, and to exhort, press, and persuade us to pray to God. I am very thankful to you for your pains. I must acknowledge I have been used to pass all my days in an old canoe, and now you exhort me to change and leave my old canoe and embark in a new one, to which I have hitherto been unwilling, but now I yield myself to your advice and do engage to pray to God hereafter." And the sincerity of the acceptance of the "white man's God" by Wannalancet was proved in many ways in his righteous dealings, both with his tribe and the colonists.

Not only around this immediate neighborhood, but all along the Merrimack River as far north as Lake Winnepesaukee, the Indians had their hunting grounds, their fields of grain, and their fishing spots. But the English settlers were the most numerous in the towns around what is now Lowell, and as Wannalancet personally preferred to be near the English, he made his permanent royal residence on the charming island of Wickassee, afterwards known as Tyng's Island which the Country Club now owns. And indeed this island was most fitly framed by Nature to be a royal residence for the Indian Chief and his people. Its rich and fertile lands brought forth abundant crops. In the deep pools below Wickassee Falls, were shoals of fish, and the Merrimack river surrounding and reaching far beyond and below the island, was a splendid water-road for the gayly bedecked Indians who paddled swiftly up and down its noble surface in their birch bark canoes. And there can be given no stronger proof of the high principles and goodness that constantly actuated Wannalancet, than the fact that he voluntarily sold his beautiful home—Wickassee Island, to the English, to release his brother from prison where he had been placed by the

## THE STORY OF WANNALANCET

colonists for debt. After a few years of wandering, Wannalancet was able to redeem his home and it became again his royal residence.

But, by this time, it was only a remnant of the once powerful tribe of the Merrimack Valley Indians that remained. A severe sickness called the plague had wrought sad havoc among the Indians, and the depredations of their enemies, the Mohawks and Tarratines, had thinned their ranks. The power and glory of this once great and war-like tribe were fading away.

In 1675, there was a general uprising of Indians in all the colonies against the English, known as King Phillip's War, and King Phillip sent messengers to the Merrimack Valley Indians, urging them to unite with him in exterminating the colonists, but Wannalancet and his people remained firm and loyal friends to the white settlers, and that there were but few and slight attacks made upon the settlements in this section of the country, was due to the friendship of Wannalancet, who warned them of the approach of the enemy. But his friendship was not rewarded with gratitude. Many of the white settlers distrusted and abused him and his followers, but Wannalancet never faltered in his kindly purpose towards them, or betrayed those whom he called his friends.

But finally, the Merrimack Valley Indians suffered so much from the attacks of the hostile tribes and the molestations of the suspicious colonists, that they left their fertile corn fields and familiar fishing spots, and went into the wilderness where they spent the winter of 1675-6, around the head waters of the Connecticut. They suffered extremely from the ice and cold during this season, having no shelter but the thickets, and great scarcity of food.

Meanwhile, the white settlers in the Merrimack Valley to whom Wannalancet had been always faithful, destroyed the former settlements of the Indians, burning their wigwams and



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carrying away their stores of dried fish and corn. Yet in spite of all the persecutions and ill-usage practised on him and his people by the vicious element among the colonists, Wannalancet never failed in his loyalty to them, and at the close of King Phillip's War, nearly all of his lands having been confiscated by the General Court, he and what was left of his tribe returned to Wickassee Island and were placed under the guardianship of Colonel Jonathan Tyng, whose large plantation was on the shore almost opposite the island. The condition of the Indians at this time was most pitiful. John Eliot records that "the colonists had ploughed and sown all the lands belonging to the Red Men and they had little corn to subsist by."

After stopping on Wickassee Island but a little while, Wannalancet and his people wandered through New England to Canada, but they ever carried in their hearts the memory of their beloved Pawtucket, and in time, they returned again to the Merrimack Valley to re-visit their once happy homes. A deed is on record, showing that Wannalancet, on his return to the colonies, gave up all the lands that now remained to him, to the English, and homeless and landless, Wannalancet and his followers again wandered back to Canada and joined the St. Francis Indians among whom they lived six years.

Wannalancet would probably have ended his days there, but in 1692, at the time of King William's War, the English settlers around Pawtucket, in the neighboring towns of Dunstable and Chelmsford, remembered the friendship of Wannalancet to the whites in times past, and, believing that they would be safer and more secure with him among them once more, to stand between them and the hostile Indians, sent messengers to Canada and besought Wannalancet to come back to Massachusetts to assist them. Wannalancet returned with the messengers and as long as the Indian troubles lasted was constant in his service and loyalty to the whites in this district.

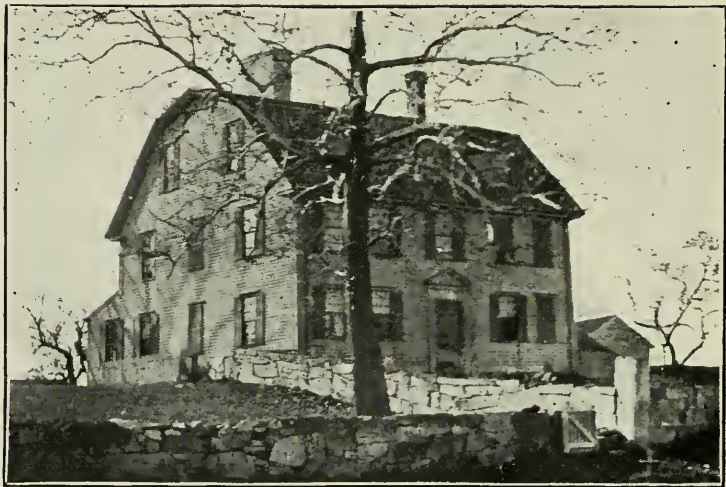
## THE STORY OF WANNALANCET

But years were beginning to bring feebleness and infirmities to the old chief. Nearly all of his old friends were gone; his kindred were scattered; his home was lost. Yet in his old age he was not quite forgotten, for he found a shelter and a home in the Old Tyng Mansion, and a firm friend in Colonel Jonathan Tyng who endeavored to repay some of the kindnesses manifested by Wannalancet to the English settlers. Here, the old Indian Sachem passed the last four years of his life:—in pleasant weather, sitting for hours at a time in the shadow of the large boulder, which rested in the grounds facing the Tyng House, gazing at the Merrimack river on whose bosom he had spent such happy seasons, or over at Wickassee Island, the home for so many years of his race. What pathetic memories must have assailed the old chief, as the last of his immediate race in this region, he looked upon this spot! Fancy wonders if he ever re-visited his former homes, and, as he stood where once the camp-fires burned, did his heart yearn for mother, wife, or child! Or did his memory turn to his home in his father's lodge when his sister, the beautiful Weetamoo shared with him in the joys of the hunter's life, and did his heart grow young again as he re-called the great festivities of his tribe on the day that Weetamoo wedded the powerful Saugus sachem?

In the lonely winter evenings of these four last years of the old chief's life, we may picture Colonel Tyng and Wannalancet sitting by the fire-side, talking of their early experiences in this almost wilderness—for, to both, was the country dear; the solitude, the mournful pines, the blue river, and the arching sky over all. And at length Wannalancet died and was buried in the Old Tyng Cemetery, where lies Hon. Edward Tyng and his wife Lady Mary, and their faithful body-servants.

A few years ago the society of Colonial Dames of Massachusetts visited the Old Tyng House in Tyngsborough and on the boulder so dear to Wannalancet, placed a tablet with





THE OLD TYNG HOUSE

## THE STORY OF WANNALANCET

this inscription: "In this place, lived during his last years, and died in 1696, Wannalancet, last Sachem of the Merrimack River Indians; Son of Passaconaway. Like his father, a faithful friend of the early New England Colonists."

Rev. Dr. J. M. Greene, pastor-emeritus of the Eliot Congregational Church of Lowell used these words at the dedication of the "Boulder:" "Glad am I that we have a monument erected to the memory of Wannalancet. His tribe and his race have disappeared and it is most seemly that the descendants of those whom he befriended should preserve his name and defend his character. We are told that the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance and I believe the good, the faithful, and conscientious Wannalancet was on earth, and is in Heaven, among the righteous."

When we think of Lowell as it is at present, an immense manufacturing city, with a population contributed from all nations of the world, we feel that the words of Passaconaway spoken to his people nearly two hundred and fifty years ago, have, indeed, come true: "The pale faces shall live upon your hunting grounds and make their villages upon your fishing places."

And is it not wise to turn aside from the busy life of today and give a thought to the earliest inhabitants of this district, the Red Men, who spent happy hours along the banks of our beautiful streams, the Merrimack and the Musketaquid, who planted, and fished, and hunted, who lived, and loved, and suffered, on the very places now occupied by our homes and our industries.

As the memory of Wannalancet is so closely connected with the Old Tyng Mansion, a sketch of the house in which he spent the last years of his life may be of some interest.

It is situated but a few rods above the entrance to the Country Club, on the road from North Chelmsford to Tyngs-

## THE STORY OF WANNALANCET

borough. The Old Tyng House, afterwards known as the Drake House, was built by Colonel Jonathan Tyng about 1674, and at that time was the most northerly house in the Massachusetts Colony. It was indeed a perfect type of the early colonial mansions and was surrounded by hundreds of acres of land, which, according to early custom, was cultivated by slaves, and even today, the slave pens in the spacious attics where refractory slaves were confined, may be seen by curious visitors, and the slave bell which summoned the slaves from their labors, is still hanging in the tower of one of the out-buildings.

During King Philip's War, the mansion was used as a Garrison House and while other white settlers of Dunstable and Tyngsborough fled to Boston for safety, Colonel Tyng remained in his home, which from its sightly location, was indeed a watch-tower for the district.

Besides its military history, the Old Tyng House has a romance, for there, a village beauty, named Judith Thompson met a tragic fate. Being on a lengthy visit to the Tyng Mansion, Judith loved, "not wisely but too well," the heir to the estate, John Alford Tyng, and tradition says that when young Tyng wearied of her beauty, he smothered both her and her infant child with his own hands. From that moment their spirits never left him; they drove him from his ancestral home to a new one which he had built nearby; and the old residents of Tyngsborough still tell of the glimpses they have seen of the young girl and her child, gliding ghost-like among the trees of the old plantation.

The Old Tyng House has entertained many notable visitors, among them being George Whitefield the famous English Methodist Divine, and from the boulder beneath whose shadow Wannalancet had passed so many hours, he preached the glad tidings of peace and good will.

## THE STORY OF WANNALANCET

Hannah Dustin also passed a night at this house; after escaping from the Indian camp at Pennacook and bearing her ghastly cargo of Indian scalps, she was paddling down the Merrimack river in a canoe to her old home at Haverhill, when reaching the Tyng House, exhausted with hunger and fatigue, she begged for rest and shelter and was warmly welcomed.

The Old Tyng House is replete with local interest, but both tradition and memory ever more link in historic tales the old house and the name of Wannalancet, and one wonders if sometimes the wraith of the old Sachem ever re-visits this spot so dear to him, or in some spirit-built craft glides along the bosom of his beloved Merrimack, or peradventure sits enthroned in royal estate on the beautiful and poetic Wickassee Island.









Col. Marie Louis Amand Ansart  
De Marisquelles.







COL. MARIE LOUIS AMAND ANSART DE MARISQUELES

# Col. Marie Louis Amand Ansart De Marisquelles

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## A French Officer of Distinction in the Revolutionary War

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In reviving the early memories and in studying the past of New England, one often meets with facts and traditions most fascinating and interesting to the student of history, and surely, no modern romance can compare in adventure with the actual life and deeds of the subject of this sketch—Col. Marie Louis Amand Ansart De Marisquelles.

In the old Woodbine Cemetery in Dracut, Massachusetts, is an ancient headstone with this inscription: Erected in memory of Col. Louis Ansart who departed this life May 22, A. D., 1804, æ 62.

Col. Ansart was a native of France; he arrived in this country in 1776 and by the authorities of Massachusetts was immediately appointed Colonel of Artillery and Inspector General of the Foundries in which capacity he served until the close of the war of the Revolution.

Marie Louis Amand Ansart De Marisquelles was born in France in 1742, probably in the province of Arras. According to family records, he was of noble birth, his father bearing the rank of Marquis. He was one of a number of children, having at least one brother and two sisters. His brother being the elder, would by the law of France, have inherited the title of Marquis. Marie Louis De Marisquelles had also powerful and wealthy relatives, one of them the Marquis of Montalembert, living in Angoulême, and although of great estate, was devoted to the study of case-mates, of fortifications and of artillery in general, and was a noted French Engineer.

## COL. DE MARISQUELLES

Our hero lived the life of the youth of noble family in those times. At a proper age, he entered a military academy where fencing, horsemanship, sword exercise and quieter studies filled his days; this academy admitted only boys of noble rank and was the one in which Louis XVI and the young Marquis de Lafayette were fitted for their duties in the great world, and it is most interesting to relate, that according to family tradition, these three graduates of this academy were, in maturer life warm and loyal friends. De Marisquelles was very proficient in his studies, both classical and military, and at the early age of fourteen, his father purchased for him a Lieutenant's commission, and thus he entered upon the military service of his native country. When he reached manhood, Marie Louis De Marisquelles was versed in all the manly arts of the day, a favorite at the French Court, at one time a member of the King's body guard, debonair, handsome and fascinating, the possessor of a generous income from his father, who besides his landed property, had amassed considerable wealth as conjointly with his relative, the Marquis of Montalembert, he had furnished for many years all the iron cannon in the service of the French King. Like all young men of his age and rank, De Marisquelles led the life of the time, somewhat gay, addicted to high play, and not averse to settling a dispute by the then noble art of duelling. Travelled, accomplished, brave and daring, he was a favorite everywhere, yet sometimes his high spirit led to unpleasant consequences. An adventure of his youth is thus related by one of his descendants: During a public entertainment held in Paris, Lieutenant De Marisquelles occupied a box in the amphitheatre accompanied by his lady and chaperon. A French Noble, somewhat overcome with wine, intruded into the box occupied by De Marisquelles, and insisted on remaining there despite the remonstrances of the Lieutenant, finally becoming exceedingly insolent. De Marisquelles then seized him bodily, bore him to the front of the box



## COL. DE MARISQUELLES

and pitched him over very unceremoniously into the audience below. The offended French nobleman being of great influence, succeeded in having Lieutenant Marisquelles arrested for this offence, but he was imprisoned only a short time and finally liberated without trial.

An adventure of his while travelling in Italy is somewhat sensational in nature but throws light on the life of that day. Lieutenant De Marisquelles had been playing for high stakes at a gambling resort in a certain city in Italy and had been very successful, winning money, gold, watches and diamonds until he was heavily laden, but as he was driving to his hotel that night, his postillion was shot and his carriage stopped, and De Marisquelles received a blow on his head that stunned him. When he recovered consciousness he found himself lying by the road side, half stripped, robbed of all his valuables, and suffering from a dirk-knife wound in his side; he was carried to his hotel and after a severe illness, was glad to leave the Italian city.

In his youth Lieutenant De Marisquelles was of a peculiarly fair complexion, tall and slender, with particularly delicate hands, and this rather feminine style of beauty sometimes deceived strangers, as to his bravery. Being at one time insulted at some public event in France, young De Marisquelles promptly challenged his insulter to defend himself with his sword, but his opponent refused the challenge, stating that he never fought with "girls," meaning to cast a slur on the fair looks and immaculate appearance of De Marisquelles. Tradition says that the Lieutenant, exasperated beyond control, drew his sword and made such lightning like passes around his opponent, barely touching him, and yet with every touch drawing blood, that his adversary, after apologizing, ignominiously retreated.

It must not be thought by these incidents of adventure, that De Marisquelles led a frivolous or effeminate life. For many years now, he had been associated with his father and the

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Marquis Montalembert in the Forges of Frances and had become a skilful and noted Military Engineer; had gained the rank of Captain of Infantry, and it is said that his sound advice and good sense were much appreciated at the French Court and were of great value to Louis XVI in his unhappy reign.

During the struggle of the American Colonies with Great Britain, the eyes of France were turned with great interest towards our shores and the conflict became an absorbing topic in that country. None there were more sympathetic in their feelings towards us than Marie Louis Amand Ansart De Marisquelles, and he finally determined to offer his services to the struggling Colonies. Tradition states that he accompanied Lafayette to this country as aid, but the records show that his arrival antedated Lafayette's by a year. The friendship between these two Frenchmen was very strong and probably this intimacy gave rise to the tradition. Captain De Marisquelles came to America in 1776, bringing credentials from high officials in his native land in regard to his skill in the Forges of France and the casting of solid cannon. De Marisquelles at once made the following proposal to the General Court of Massachusetts, of which proposal the following is an exact copy from the Court Records of the State House, Boston:

Monday, Dec. 9th, 1776, Present in Council, Honb'le

James Bowdoin	John Taylor
Jeremiah Sever	Benja. White
Caleb Cushing	William Phillips
Benja. Chadbourne	Benja. Austin
Thomas Cushing	Henry Gardner
Benja. Lincoln	Daniel Davis
Samuel Holton	Davis Sewall
Jabez Fisher, Esq.	Daniel Hopkins

Francis Dana, Esq.

## COL. DE MARISQUELLES

Proposal of Monsieur De Marisquelles, viz: Marie Louis Amand Ansart De Marisquelles, an old Captain of Infantry, having been brought up in the Forges of Frances (his father and the Marquis of Montalembert, his relative having furnished for many years all the iron cannon in the service of the French King) proposes to the Honb'le Council and House of Representatives to establish Furnaces in the State of Massachusetts Bay, upon account of the government, for the purpose of furnishing the State with all such Iron Cannon as they may need. He has some particular methods of softening the iron by a mixture of ores and minerals; and also of casting the Cannon solid and boring the same by which means they are rendered massey and yet stronger than others cast with a Cylinder. Formerly all Cannon were cast with a Cylinder which always occasioned many little Holes or Cavities in the Pieces and which frequently occasioned their bursting. His father having observed how prejudicial these Cavities were to the Service of the Artillery, he, in the year 1750, cast many solid cannon and found them superior to those cast with a Cylinder; and at present, no other but solid Cannon are cast in the Forges of France. His Father is the inventor of the machine which is used for boring said cannon; and with it, a twenty-four pounder may be bored, polished and the spruce cut off in twenty four hours.

If the State will furnish the Land, Buildings, Machines, and every necessary material for the purposes, and cannon, he will construct the Furnaces and superintend and direct the Buildings and everything relating to the said Foundry, which if ready and the mills prepared for Boring, he will then furnish one Cannon ready for Service every twenty four Hours out of the common Iron ore within this State, it being understood that he should have cast a few before-hand to give them time to cool. The Calibre or Bore of the Cannon will depend upon the largeness of the Furnaces. He will prove his cannon before Commissaries appointed by the State. He will disclose at any time

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all his knowledge in the premises, to any such persons as the State may Order and to no others. And if he does not fulfill the whole promised on his part, in these proposals (unavoidable casualties excepted) he agrees not only to forfeit all claim to any thing, by virute of these presents, but also to forfeit the sum of One Thousand pounds to satisfy the damages the State may sustain thro' his failure in fulfilling his Proposals aforesaid. He expects from the State to receive three hundred Dollars in hand to compensate the expenses he has been at in removing from Europe to this State; and also One Thousand Dollars yearly from and after the date hereof, until the end of the present War between Great Britain and the United States of America; and after that time the Sum of Six Hundred Sixty Six and two thirds Dollars, yearly during his life. He, doing and performing his part in all respects as aforesaid. He also expects the honor of a Colonel's Commission to give him Rank but without any command or pay in virtue of said Commission. Witness his hand at Boston, December 6th, 1776.

### DE MARISQUELLES

Signed by the above mentioned Mons'r De Marisqueles after being fully interpreted to him in the presence of James Price.  
Boston, December 7th, 1776.

We the Subscribers, being a Committee of the Honb'le House of Representatives, appointed to agree with the aforementioned Monsieur De Marisqueles, Do, in behalf of Honb'le House agree to the foregoing Proposals.

Palmer

Committee

N. Cushing

Of The House

State of Massachusetts Bay.

In the House of Representatives, Dec. 7th, 1776. The  
aforegoing Agreement being read, the same was approved of,

Sent up for concurrence

SAMUEL FREEMAN,

*Speaker P. T.*

## COL. DE MARISQUELLES

In Council, December 9th, 1776.

Read and concurred

JOHN AVERY, *Day Sec.*

Consented to by 15 of the Council.

Besides the title of Colonel of Artillery granted him by the Council, De Marisqueles was appointed Inspector General of the Foundries of Massachusetts. He built his Furnaces for the casting of solid cannon in different towns in this State, Bridgewater, Titticut and Stoughtonham, each containing one, and it is said that some of his cannon and mortars are yet in existence, and are still serviceable and valuable. One of the cannon inscribed with his name is to be found in Cambridge. In 1778, Admiral d'Estaing asked the General Court for assistance in protecting his French Fleet then in Boston Harbor, and Colonel De Marisqueles was sent to his relief and aid, as the following Order from the Council will testify:

Monday morning, August 31, 1778, five o'clock.

Present in Council,

Hon'ble Jeremiah Powell

Artemas Ward

Walter Spinner

Jedediah Preble

Thomas Cushing

Benj'a White, Registrer

Benj'a Austin

Henry Gardner

Nathan Cushing

Joseph Simpson

John Pitts

Oliver Wendall, Esq.

Whereas Vice Admiral Count de 'Estaing has requested that this Board would appoint an officer to direct and oversee the

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erecting certain works which he thinks necessary to be thrown up in order to secure his ships now in Nantasket Road, against the enemies fleet supposed to be in this bay. Therefore Louis De Marisquelles, Colonel of Artillery and Inspector of the general foundries of this State, is hereby appointed an Engineer to oversee and direct in the erecting such works as Vice Admiral Count de 'Estaing shall think necessary to have thrown up, for the purpose of securing the ships under his command in Nantasket Road. And Colonel De Marisquelles will repair to Vice Admiral Count de 'Estaing without loss of time and know his pleasure on the premises and follow his orders 'till the works aforesaid are finished. Whereas the Count de 'Estaing has proposed to throw up some works upon Hull, Point Alderton,\* the head of Long Island, and another Hill, near the places above mentioned for the defence of this Harbor, as well as the fleet under his command, Provided he can be supplied with a number of Spades and Pick Axes, and also a quantity of Timber and Plank for platforms. Ordered that the Board of War supply Colonel De Marisquelles (who is appointed to oversee this business) with such a number of Spades and Pick Axes as he may think necessary and also with such a number of suitable boats as may be wanted for the transportation of Cannon, Timber, and Plank, for the purpose aforesaid, and it is further ordered that the Committee for fortifying the Harbor of Boston, also supply Colonel De Marisquelles with such a quantity of Timber and Plank as he may have occasion for, for the business aforesaid, out of the Plank and Timber they have provided for Castle Island."

In the same year 1778, troops were sent from Massachusetts to Newport, Rhode Island, to assist Gen. Sullivan in forcing the British to leave that State. Colonel Louis Ansart De Marisquelles was appointed aid-de-camp to General Sullivan who was

\*Allerton



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in command of the American forces. General James Mitchell Varnum came from the Continental Army in Rhode Island with his brigade to assist in the undertaking, and, to the great joy of De Marisquelles, the Marquis de Lafayette came from the American Camp to help in this expedition. Aid was also expected from the fleet of d'Estaing, but a violent storm, both on sea and land defeated the whole enterprise. This attempt of General Sullivan cannot be considered a success, and De Marisquelles suffered severely, personally, he having been seriously wounded during an assault on the British forces.

During this expedition against the British in Rhode Island, De Marisquelles met, probably for the first time, General James Mitchell Varnum, of Dracut, and a sincere friendship was formed between them, enduring through the brief life of the gallant General Varnum, but this is not thought to have been the first meeting between the Marquis de Lafayette and De Marisquelles in America, as tradition claims that the two noble Frenchmen had made opportunities to see each other previously. Soon after the return of Colonel De Marisquelles to Boston, Lafayette visited him there, while on a political mission to that city, under permission of Congress.

There is a sad little love story connected with the memory of the gallant Frenchman, whether true or false, I know not. It is to the effect that when De Marisquelles sailed from France he left behind him, a sorrowing demoiselle for whose sake he went forth to gain additional fame and glory; her letters followed him here, but there were but few to translate a French address, and, so many of her messages were never delivered to her lover. He, hurt and offended at her supposed silence, sent no word across the water, and the fair demoiselle faded away, happy in her belief in her hero, but mourning him as dead in "savage America." But whatever the authority of this tradition, it is a fact that De Marisquelles fell passionately in love with, and mar-

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ried a Miss Wimble, the daughter of Captain William Wimble of Boston, about the year 1778. The Wimble family occupied a high social position in Boston and held large grants of land from the government in the South; it is said that Wilmington, North Carolina is built on a section of the Wimble property.

The married happiness of De Marisquelles was short, as his bride died within a twelve-month of the wedding.

“Ah, life is brief, though love be long  
The altar and the bier,  
The burial hymn and bridal song  
Were both in one short year.”

The lost bride of De Marisquelles had a younger sister who resembled her greatly, being very beautiful. When the year of mourning had elapsed, De Marisquelles proposed marriage to the fair Catherine, then a girl of eighteen, who accepted him gladly, being very much fascinated with the handsome high-bred officer, although he was twice her age, and they were married September 9, 1781. After his marriage to Miss Catherine Wimble, De Marisquelles resided for a while in Boston, probably at the Wimble homestead where his two oldest children, Robert and Louis were born, and he made that city his home until the close of the Revolutionary War and the signing of the treaty in Paris in 1783. About the year 1784, De Marisquelles removed to Dracut, Massachusetts, occupying the farm styled “The Ministree,” formerly the home of Rev. Thomas Parker, the first Minister of Dracut, situated on the “Old Ferry Road,” off from what is now Varnum Avenue, and nearly opposite the “Old Middlesex Tavern” across the river. De Marisquelles had been influenced in his choice of a home by several motives: a lover of the beauties of Nature, on one of his rides through the country, he had remarked the loveliness of the Merrimack River, bordered by the green fields of Dracut, and his interest in the town had been stimulated through his friendship with James Mitchell Var-



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num, a native of Dracut. An ardent sportsman, De Marisquelles had discovered that the Merrimack was alive with salmon, and he recalled the advice of his father, the Marquis, who on his son Louis leaving France, advised him if he settled in a new country, to choose a home near some large river as then he need never starve. And so, to this quiet country home, came the gallant officer, the travelled gentleman, the one-time favorite at the French Court, and began life anew under strangely different environments, but the new conditions had their compensating attractions. De Marisquelles was attached to his young American wife and the children that came to them. She bore him twelve in all, five sons and seven daughters, ten of them being born in the "Old Ministree" which De Marisquelles made his permanent home, the remainder of his days. De Marisquelles held the office of Inspector General of the Foundries of Massachusetts for his life, and although the duties incumbent on his position were merely nominal after the close of the Revolutionary War, the office kept De Marisquelles in touch with military affairs and military men.

The Hamblett, or, as it was afterwards called the Ansart Ferry, was almost at his door, and De Marisquelles could easily join in whatever festivities were held in the then famous Middlesex Tavern, for, in those days it was a general stopping place for travellers to and from Boston, and the entertainments there were said to be of a lively nature; or, by the use of the stage which ran from the tavern he could attend the more formal functions among his friends in the stately city of Boston or in the larger world beyond.

"Yet still in gay and careless ease  
In harvest field or dance,  
He brought the gentle courtesies,  
The nameless grace of France."

And his old friends across the ocean did not forget him. In 1784, when Lafayette re-visited America, he was a guest for

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a day at the home of De Marisquelles in Dracut. A descendant of the family has told me that his grandfather\* used often to speak of this visit of Lafayette to his father, De Marisquelles. The Marquis came from Boston with coach and four, outriders and footmen, and crossed over on the "Old Ferry" to the Dracut shore. One pleasant afternoon, not long ago, I walked up the green and grassy lane through which Lafayette had passed over a hundred years ago, and I tried to picture the meeting of those two old friends, on the spot where I then stood—the stately Marquis in the dress of his rank and age, velvet suit, long silk stockings, and shoes with silver buckles, and the no less courtly host, but, perhaps in plainer garb. As Nature is the same today on this bank of the Merrimack, as long ago; the lovely winding river at our feet, the wide-spreading velvety fields, and the brilliant blue sky over all—it seemed as if Time swept the years away, and I stood, in truth, a witness to the meeting.

De Marisquelles made three trips to France during his married life, to renew old friendships and see his own kindred, two of his sisters in France being especially dear to him, and constant correspondents of his. On one of his return trips, De Marisquelles brought with him some young mulberry trees, intending to engage in the raising of silk-worms, but the New England east winds were fatal to this enterprise, although the trees grew to great stature.

A descendant of Colonel De Marisquelles relates that her grandfather also brought from France at one time, seven immense chests filled with the richest silks, rarest laces, and magnificent brocades that were manufactured in France. De Marisquelles intended to realize some profit by introducing these goods into America, but the war had decreased the revenue of the Americans, so that but few of them were sold, and the goods that were not given away were used to a great degree in the

\*Atis Ansart

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family of De Marisquelles; my informant telling me that her grandmother had at one time nineteen silk gowns of different tints and fabrics.

De Marisquelles was in France when his dear friend and patron, Louis XVI was arrested and imprisoned, the first steps towards the fatal guillotine, by which he suffered in January, 1793. Whether any of the noble relatives of De Marisquelles were victims to the same fate is a matter of uncertainty, but, surely during the Revolution in France, that country was a very unsafe abiding place for the nobility. Six months after the decapitation of Louis XVI, De Marisquelles announced his intention to apply for an act of naturalization and become an American citizen. I am told that he did not make this decision until after the death of his father, so it is probable that his father's death occurred about the time of the execution of Louis XVI. At the same time that De Marisquelles made application for the act of naturalization, he also petitioned that the Legislature give him permission to omit the addition of De Marisquelles to his name and that he should be known as Louis Ansart. That these petitions were granted the following document will testify:

“Louis Ansart De Marisquelles—Petition. To the Honbl<sup>e</sup> Senate and House of Representatives in General Court Assembled.

Humbly sheweth that Louis Ansart De Marisquelles has been in America ever since the second year of the War between Great Britain and the United States of America and has been a resident of this Commonwealth \* \* \* \* \*

That he is about to make Application to a Law Court, agreeable to a Law of the United States, for an Act of Naturalization, and being desirous of being naturalized by the name of Louis Ansart which is his Christian and Family Name. He prays your Honors to pass an Act authorizing him to omit the

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addition of De Marisquelles, and that in future to be known by the name of Louis Ansart and as in duty bound shall ever pray.

June 1st, 1793.           LOUIS ANSART DE MARISQUELLES

“COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS:

In the year of our Lord, 1793. An Act authorizing Louis Ansart De Marisquelles to omit the addition of De Marisquelles and be called and known by the name of Louis Ansart \* \* \*

Whereas Louis Ansart De Marisquelles of Dracut, in the County of Middlesex has petitioned this Court, praying that he may be authorized to omit the addition of De Marisquelles and that he may be called and known by the name of Louis Ansart which are his Christian and Family name.

Be it therefore enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled and by the authority of the same, that said Louis Ansart De Marisquelles be, and he hereby is allowed and authorized to omit the said addition of De Marisquelles and that he be hereafter called and known by the name of Louis Ansart.

In Senate June 3d, 1793. This bill having had two several readings, passed to be engrossed.

Sent down for concurrence.

SAMUEL PHILLIPS,

*Pres'd*

In the House of Representatives, June 4, 1793.

This bill having had three several readings passed on concurrence to be engrossed.

Sent up for concurrence.

EDWARD A. ROBBINS,

*Speaker*

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In Senate, June 4, 1793.

Read and concurred.

SAMUEL PHILLIPS,

*President*

During his residence in Dracut, Colonel Ansart, as he must now be called, was interested in all that pertained to the welfare of his adopted town. His name is found as one of the first proprietors of the early Toll Bridge over the Merrimack River at Pawtucket Falls, and records are found that show that he was active in the founding of school and church in Dracut. With his government income and inherited wealth, Colonel Ansart dwelt in excellent style for those days. He kept servants both white and colored, importing a French cook for his own domestic service, and drove in a sulky with a span of fine horses. It is said that his was the first sulky owned in Dracut. Colonel Ansart spent money so freely, that except the acres of land which at different times he purchased to increase his farm that extended far along the "Old River Meadow Road," we can find no records that he amassed any property.

In appearance, Colonel Ansart was a very handsome man, with his fair complexion and brilliant blue eyes, standing six feet high and weighing 200 pounds. I have seen a photograph taken from a painted miniature of him in his later years, that corroborates all the traditions of his fine personality. In disposition, as was natural from his training and military life, he was stern, rigid, and imperious but withal so lovable that he was adored by family and servants.

Colonel Ansart died at the age of sixty-two, and was buried in the cemetery which he had apportioned from his farm and given to Dracut for the use of the Ansarts, Coburns and Varnums, and where after "life's fitful fever," he sleeps as calmly on the rugged New England hillside, as if he lay in the ancestral tomb in sunny France.

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Owing to the change of name, the memory and grave of Colonel Ansart have not received the homage which the French government loves to pay to its noblemen who served in the War of the Revolution in America, but when our country publishes its "Roll of Honor" of those who assisted in securing the Independence of the Colonies by the shedding of their blood, or the giving of their strength and skill, among those whom his adopted country shall delight thus to honor, will be enrolled the name of Colonel Marie Louis Amand Ansart De Marisquelles.













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